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THE

ENDOWMENTS OF MAN

THE

ENDOWMENTS OF MAN

CONSIDERED IN THEIR RELATIONS WITH HIS FINAL END.

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A Course of Lectures

BY

BISHOP ULLATHORNE.

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PREFACE.

THESE Lectures were delivered in their original form to the clerics of St. Bernard's Seminary, but have since been reconstructed and enlarged for a wider audience. They are an example of that constructive method of teaching, which, so far from neglecting the analytical method, absorbs it in the edifice built up of large and harmonious truths. Two objects are contemplated in this work. The first and chief is to fortify the instructed Catholic mind against the errors respecting man and his endowments which so widely pervade the world of thought in our day, not so much by direct confutation, as by confronting them with the Catholic view of man, as it has been revealed by God, and drawn out by Catholic thinkers through the long ages of Christianity. It has for some time been the fashion with the infidel school to leave God aside, to declare that the Divine Author of their being is unknown to them, and is inaccessible to their knowledge. By this confession of their mental and moral blindness, these men, who profess, notwithstanding, to be the enlighteners of their age, put themselves to shame before the common sense and conscience of mankind at large. Nevertheless the poison of their writings reaches its way into many unguarded minds; and whilst they profess not to have God in their knowledge, they are mischievously employed in endeavouring to pull man to pieces, and as far as the theories of the brain can destroy the facts of creation, to efface from him the testimonies of God, and the witnesses of his noble origin and of his sublime

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destination. What they endeavour to destroy is the subject of this book.

My second object may be expressed in a few words. I have for some years contemplated a book on certain fundamental virtues which belong to the Church of Christ, but not to the world. But I deeply felt that the book I contemplated required a certain preparation of mind, as the virtues of faith, humility, and Christian magnanimity rest on very deep foundations. I therefore composed this book, although complete in itself, by way of preface to another book, should the goodwill of God enable me to bring it to a conclusion.

I have only to add, that I have freely used the materials of more authoritative writers, where they suited my purpose, without always expressing my obligations.

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LECTURE I.

ON THE NATURE OF MAN.

"What is man that thou shouldst magnify him? or why shouldst thou set thy heart upon him?"—JOB vii. 17.

THE world repeats the saying of the poet, that the proper study of mankind is man; but whilst the men of the world commend this study as of chief importance, they pronounce their own condemnation. For what man of the world cares to know himself? And how can any one know man who is ignorant of himself? The knowledge of his earthly frame is not the knowledge of man; nor the natural history that marks the external diversities of the various branches of the human family; nor the science of his mental faculties and their operations; nor those other sciences that investigate by parts the several elements that enter into his composition. When these sciences are pursued with loyalty to the facts, and the mind of the investigator is free from imaginative theories, they confirm the essential unity of the human race, notwithstanding accidental differences that only mark the diversities within the species. But those partial studies of the components of human nature will not teach us the profounder things that belong to our humanity; on the contrary, from the mind absorbed in the study of the external man, the internal man is but too apt to escape, so that what constitutes the dignity of man is lost from view.

There is also a certain practical knowledge of man that is called the knowledge of the world, and the knowledge of life. But unhappily this knowledge of the world is more occupied with the deviations of men from the true standard of manhood, than

with what concerns his true dignity; and there is truth in the words of the sage who said, "I never return from among men, but I find myself less a man."

There is but one science in which man is comprehensively and completely known, and that is the science of God. For God alone knows with a complete knowledge how He has made man, and for what end He has made him. It may be said, therefore, with perfect truth, that the simple-hearted man who lives humbly in the light of divine revelation, has a more profound and exalted knowledge of man than all these sciences could teach him. For the true man is within us, and this man can neither be reached by the scalpel of the anatomist, nor by the investigator of our mental operations, nor by the observer of man's social conduct. The soul is more than the body, and the light is more than the soul, and the life is more than the light. To find the light of truth, we must close the five windows of the senses, that the interior house may be lighted up. To find the life of the soul, we must open the door of our inward sense, that the Divine Giver of our life may find no resistance.

God is not only the creator, but the illuminator of man; it is His light that reveals us to ourselves. He who knows himself through this illumination has a light by which to know all mankind. But this knowledge is rare, because men as a rule look outwards, and not inwards. There is much within us, nevertheless, that self-knowledge never reaches, and that is known to God alone. Even of what we do know, there is much that comes not to the surface whether through action or speech. The outward man is not the full expression of the inward man. If men who limit their studies to the exterior man are often led into absurd theories respecting his nature and origin; other men who desert the knowledge of God are carried away into theories as far from the truth, through their ignorance of what is mysterious in his soul.

To understand what man is, we must know the fundamental principle of his constitution. Without this principle we have no key to his nature. Composed of a spiritual soul and a material body, the body is the organ of the soul and the soul is the vital form of the body. The body of man is the immediate subject of his soul, and his soul is the immediate subject of God. This, then, is the fundamental principle of his constitution, that man is a subject

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made for an object, and without knowing the object we cannot understand the subject. Let us explain this by some familiar example. The eye of man is the subject of light. The eye is the subject, light and the forms of things contained in light are the object of the eye. If we had never known light, we should never have understood the nature of the eye, or why it was made as it is made. But the light itself teaches us, and from it we know that the eye is a subject receptive of light, and of the things contained in light, which are its object. The heart, again, as taken for the seat of our affections, is the subject of love; but if we had never had an object to love, we should never have known the nature of the heart. But as there is an instinct and an appetite in the heart that craves for love, we should have been unhappy in the sense of our want, without knowing why we were unhappy.

Man is a subject made for an object, and nothing can satisfy him but the object for which he is made. It is, therefore, impossible to know what he is as a subject until we know for what object he is made. When he finds his true object, he understands himself. When the question is asked: Is life worth living? it can only be answered by him who understands what is the true object and the final end of life. The object of life and the final end of life are one and the same. There may be, and there are, intermediate objects of life, in which our present duties are involved; but to the man who knows God, and whose mental eyes are clear, the final object of life shines through them all. Those intermediate objects, as he knows from the light that beams from God as his final end, must be either overcome or be so mastered as to become the means to help him on to the one true object of his life. This is the solution of the trials and contests of our present life in this world. Our present life is so devised as to quicken and bring out our faculties, and to energize our will by opposition in the exercise of the virtues, and to rouse our courage and magnanimity, that we may pass, with God's help, through all intermediate objects to the final object of our life—to that supreme object of desire for which our nature is constituted, as an humble subject made for a Divine object.

Man is made for God. He is therefore made with a great capacity for eternal truth and for eternal things, and has an appetite implanted in his soul for unlimited good. It follows, as a

matter of course, that man is not an independent being; and of this he is full conscious. He is constituted under special relations of dependence on his Divine Creator, from whom he receives both light and good, and who is the final end of his existence. It is utterly impossible to understand what man is, unless we consider his relations with God; and he may always find them in the summit of his intelligence, at the root of his will, and in the light of his conscience. Even in the most perverse of men these testimonies of God cannot be effaced; the more he struggles against them, the more they assert their presence and their power. The chief purpose of his intelligence is to light him on to the knowledge of God; the chief purpose of his will is to move him on towards God, as the supreme object of desire; the one purpose of his conscience is to regulate his mind and will according to the pre-established order of justice, which is founded in the relations of his dependence on God, both as the perfecter of his being and as the final end of his existence.

The man who fancies that he is his own object, and that he is capable of giving content to himself, is utterly ignorant of the constitution of his nature. He is not the giver but the receiver of that good which gives happiness; he is the container, but not the content. God is the contenter of man; He gives him his light and his life, and the good that belongs to life; and the present light and life have for their object to bring him into the open presence of God, where God will be his light, life, and happiness. Hence the nearer a man approaches to God, the more light he has by which to know himself; but the further he recedes from God, the less light he has to understand himself. For God is to man what the sun's light and warmth are to the world; if he turns from God he is darkened and chilled with his own shadows.

A subject without its object is in a rudimentary condition, for the object completes the subject. For this reason the man who is in his just order and right relations with God is advancing towards his completion, and in him the plan of human nature is being fulfilled. For however complete a man may be in his own nature, he is not complete as a subject, which is the fundamental principle of his nature, unless he is brought into union with God as His Divine Object, and possesses the good for which he is made; that is to say, he is without his perfection and content. As God is both the Author and the Perfecter of man, He alone can teach

man what he is; for which reason Job asks of God: "What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? Or why dost thou set thy heart upon him?" As David also asks: "What is man, that thou art mindful of him? or the son of man, that thou visitest him?"

If we want proof of the extent to which men may go into error respecting the nature of man, when they reject the knowledge of God, we have only to consider the number, the extravagance, and the contradictory character of the theories of human nature which have been put forth in this unbelieving age, by men who profess to make the nature and history of man their special study. We are invited by men of culture and science to accept such theories as the following:—

One tells us that man is an animal; another, that he is a sentient, self-conscious machine. A third, that he is a conscious manifestation of an unconscious universal being. A fourth informs us that he is a mind invested with delusion. A fifth maintains that he is thought and nothing but thought. A sixth would have us understand that he is individually the one and only mind, and that all things else are but the phenomena of his mind. A seventh theory upholds that man is descended from the lowest brutal existence, either from a jelly-fish or some kind of worm, or, which is the newest theory, from a microscopic cell that lies buried at the bottom of the ocean. In a word, that the first ancestor of man was bathybius, which means the bathos of life. But when these men of science come to the immediate ancestor of man, there is again a sectarian division, one maintaining that he is descended from the ape, another from the kangaroo, although both maintain that there is a link still wanting to connect him with either of these animals.

An eighth theory makes man an evolution of the eternal mind. A ninth pronounces him to be a spark of the divinity. A tenth allows him to be a rational animal, but altogether material, secreting his thoughts from some bundle of nerves, or from some interior organ of the body. An eleventh pronounces positively than man is altogether mortal and ends in the grave, but that nevertheless collective humanity is our divinity, and the true object of our worship. A twelfth philosophy tells us that man has no free will, or choice of thought or action. A thirteenth refuses him all knowledge of God, and all power of communicating

with Him. A fourteenth maintains that man's conscience is an error, and even a blunder, and the cause of all his misery, and that it requires to be reconstructed by the authority of the civil state. And to conclude this amazing list of scientific heresies, the latest school of German infidelity has come to the conclusion that man is nothing but will, not personal will, but will of the species with imaginative presentation, and that he is nothing but hopeless misery, although an element of divinity.

Such are the consolations of modern philosophy; such the scientific dreams of men who refuse to have God in their knowledge. Their treason against God has destroyed their dignity as men. Like Satan in the Book of Job, they have gone round the earth and through it to seek the knowledge of man, yet what is open even to the ignorant and poor has escaped them. We may well say to these friends of humanity as Job said to his consolers: "Miserable comforters are ye all." If they only knew something of themselves, they might know God. If they only knew something of God, they might know themselves.

When Plato forgot his high speculations for a moment, and defined man to be a two-legged animal without feathers, Diogenes presented his man to him in the shape of a plucked fowl. The irony was perfect, and Diogenes is much wanted among our new philosophers. Plato's amendment, that man has broad toe and finger nails, completes the likeness of the old absurdity to the new ones. When naturalists tell us that man differs from the very noblest ape by a thumb, a planted foot, or a larger convolution of brain, we do not deny these or any other distinctions of the kind; but we feel our nature insulted. When the Positivists come with eloquent pens to assure us in glistening sentences that we have no soul or life beyond the grave, we are reminded of the glistening folds of the serpent in which Satan came to ruin mankind. For Heaven they give us a skull decked with flowers, and for our present consolation they offer us the worship of a corrupt and perishing humanity. But the immortal life within us springs up with indignation to repel these horrors. When the Pantheist tells us that man, with all his weakness, with all his evil propensities and vices, is an emanation, or an evolution, or a scintillation, or some other manifestation of the one Divine and Eternal Being, we know that reveries like these come of the high fever of intellectual pride, confusing the object with the subject, and

attended by some grievous disorder of the moral sense. We turn from these brainsick reveries to the light of common sense for refreshment, and seek comfort in the revelations of God. If these monstrosities of the mind strike sensible men with astonishment, they may also teach the great lesson, that we stand as much in need of the virtue of humility to keep us reasonable and safe in our common sense, as to keep us in faith with God.

But the Church, however saddened by these spectacles, is most certainly not taken by surprise. All these things are familiar to her philosophy as well as to her theology. She has great age and experience, and a long memory. Her earliest fathers had to encounter most of these theories in one shape or another, in the Gnostic sects, or in the Pagan philosophers, and she has had every one of them to encounter at one time or another. The mode of their presentation may be different, but the errors themselves are the same, and with no greater cogency than they formerly possessed. But what calls for special remark, because it conveys a great instruction, is the fact, that the nature of man has become as much a ground of dispute as the sense of the Scriptures, and by a very similar process. The Scriptures were taken out of the hands of that authority to which God committed them for their safety, and man has been taken out of the hands of God. After this the process of dissolution began, destructive criticism was first applied to the Scriptures, and afterwards to man; the diviner elements were first eliminated from the Scriptures, and next we see the effort to eliminate the diviner elements from man. The same false principle is at the root of both these procedures. The subjective man, with his own small measure of reason encompassed with imagination, and impassioned with the love of independence, has made his personal judgment the standard and the measure of all things both human and divine. The result of this anti-principle of private and subjective interpretation has been, from the nature of things, the destruction of faith, and has left almost as many opinions as heads, until it has annihilated the revelation of God in the souls of a great number of men.

By a like method destructive criticism has taken hold of man. The subjective man has withdrawn himself from God as His Divine object, has taken himself out of the hands of God, and after renouncing His authority, has undertaken to interpret the

nature of that Divine work which we call man, who is himself a revelation of God. Upon this text he exercises his rationalistic views, which are never rational, because he always leaves out of his premises certain elements that are essential and proper to man. Then the more accurately he reasons from his defective premises, the greater is the monster that comes forth in the conclusion. Either the objective truth is confounded with the subjective man, and then we have pantheism; or the soul is confounded with the body, and then we have materialism; or the image of God is rejected from the soul, and then God is declared to be unknown and unknowable.

The first distinction of man from the animal is his spiritual nature, of which he is fully conscious. The second is his possession of the light of intelligence, by which he has the perception of universal and unchangeable truth. He is the subject of that truth; the truth commands him, and calls for his submission; he cannot command or change the truth. The animal has the perception of particular things; can imagine them, remember them, compare them, and conclude from them; but the animal has not the knowledge of principles or universals, which belong to the light of intelligence. The animal has images of things, man alone can ascend from images to universal ideas; the animal can feel that this fruit is sweet, man alone can form the general idea of sweetness. His spiritual sense and aspiration after unlimited good is the third distinction of man. For the animal is limited in sense and desire to a narrow compass of material things. His conscience, enlightened with the law of justice, and with the sense of God's presence, and of his own responsibility, is his fourth distinction. His gift of language is the fifth distinction, for this gift the animal can never possess, as it depends for its exercise on the light of intelligence, and on the possession of universal ideas. His capacity for art and science is the sixth. How is it, for example, that the advocates of man's descent from animal life have never dreamed of ascribing those primitive tools, weapons, and artistic drawings of animals, to any creature but man? His seventh distinction is his capacity as God's image for the gifts of supernatural truth and Divine grace. His eighth distinction is that sense of duty to God which inclines him to religion. Cicero spoke the voice of all humanity when he said: "There is no animal but man that has the consciousness of God; and no

nation of men so wild and ferocious as not to know that they ought to have a god, even though they may not know what god they ought to have."* Finally, man is erect by nature, while the animals are curved towards the earth; his countenance, which looks towards the heavens, beams with light and intelligence, and he exercises dominion over all the animals that God has created.

To define man without giving the first place to his spiritual nature, and some indication of his relations with God, is to leave out what is principal in him, and chief in his distinctions. Many philosophers, following Aristotle, define him to be a rational animal. Others define him to be a social animal. Some, again, designate him as a religious animal. But these definitions seem to be defective, and to do him wrong in classing him with the genus animal. His first substantial principle is not animal but spiritual, and rationality is not the distinctive qualification of the animal but of the spiritual part of man. Reason is in no sense the qualification of animal. In this definition rationality is not only made the distinctive quality of the animal man, but the spiritual nature or soul of man is left to be inferred from one of its qualities, which in the form of the terms is ascribed to the animal part of man. But it has long been the fashion among free-thinkers to maintain that animals are endowed with reason; and that man, as nowadays not a few of them contend, is nothing more than an animal with a more developed reason. They are quite ready to accept this definition, and to thank us for it as the complete expression of their own conclusion; for with them man is neither more nor less than a rational animal.

But when the Almighty made man, He did not rank him with the animals, He completed the animal kingdom and then closed that period of creation. He then opened another period, in which He did not say, as He did in the successive creations of the animal world, let the earth produce the rational animal. But he introduced a new and more solemn form of creation in the words: "Let us make man." And when man was made from two distinct sources, his body from the earth and his spirit from the creative breathing of God's will, the Scripture says: "And man became a living soul." He is called man and a living soul, but not an animal. Man is never called an animal in the

* Cicero, *De Legibus*, L. II. c. viii.

Scriptures in the simple and primary sense of the word, but either in a comparative sense or with some addition; as when St. Paul speaks of the animal man, where he includes not the whole man, but only the inferior as opposed to the superior man. Where man is likened with the nobler animals for his nobler qualities, their animality is kept out of sight.

Having a spiritual nature endowed with reason and capable of divine things like the angels, but distinguished from them by the possession of an earthly body, which he has in common with the animal creation, man cannot be called an animal in the sense in which the latter are animals. His soul is the form and vital principle of his body, the mover of its actions, and the term of its sensations. The soul contains and carries the body, not the body the soul; so that when the soul departs, the body falls lifeless to the ground, and dissolves into its kindred dust. It would therefore be quite as reasonable to place man in the angelic genus because of his immortal spirit, as to place him in the animal genus because of his mortal body; but in fact he belongs to a kingdom apart both from the angels who have not bodies, and from the animals that have not souls, and that after their death have no resurrection. St. John Chrysostom therefore attacks the Aristotelian definition of man, and that repeatedly and even vehemently. He says that the pagan advocates of this definition are outsiders, and that the Scriptures do not agree with them.

The celebrated French anthropologist, Monsieur De Quartrefages tells us, that the question of the human kingdom as distinguished from the animal kingdom has been long and seriously discussed by the Anthropological Society of Paris. And he himself advocates the distinction of the human from the animal kingdom on the ground of the moral and religious faculties in man, of which there are no signs in the animal kingdom. He observes that man has the perception of moral good and evil, independently of all physical welfare or suffering. That man believes in superior beings who can exercise an influence over his destiny. And that man believes in the prolongation of his destiny after this life.*

Let us here briefly sum up the broad distinctions between man and the animal. Man has intelligence, the animal has but instinct; man has articulate speech, the animal is dumb; man reflects and knows himself, the animal does neither; man is the subject of

* De Quartrefages, *The Human Species*, c. i.

truth, the animal of sense; man has the abstract notions of good and evil, the animal has but the sense of pleasure and pain; man has conscience, the animal has no sense of responsibility; man knows God and believes in a world to come, the animals has no knowledge of God, but after serving the requirements of man it perishes utterly. The soul of man is an immortal spirit; but, as the Scripture says, the soul of the animal is in its blood.

Although the body of man is formed of mineral substances, we do not call him a mineral. Although he has vegetative powers, we do not call him a vegetable. Although like the animals he has flesh, bone and blood, yet outside the schools, you can offer no greater insult to a man than to call him an animal. To call him a rational animal will not help the matter, because his common sense tells him that as an animal he is not rational. Schools of philosophy argue out the conclusion, that a rational animal must necessarily have a soul, but this commits what is most substantial and essential in the composition of man to an inference: and to an inference which both the materialist and the pantheist will promptly deny.

Leaving the Aristotelian definition, then, to the schools that prefer it, I cannot but think the method of the Scriptures, of the Councils, of the Fathers and the Catechisms, which present man to us as a composite creation of soul and body, with the soul as the form of the body, to be far the more philosophical. It presents to us the complete idea of man in the comprehension of his genus and the distinction of the species, with the due relation of the superior or spiritual part of man to the inferior or material part of him. It likewise provides at the outset of all controversy against giving the ground in common to the theories of materialists, pantheists, and other erroneous speculators on the nature of man.

Although Plato has given us a wild and fanciful theory of human creation, which is as extravagant as that of the Gnostics, he has nevertheless given us a correct definition of man as a soul invested with a body. Although some of the Fathers use the Aristotelian definition, yet not a few of the weightiest have defined man to be an immortal or an intelligent soul served by an organized body. St. Augustine, for example, says that "man is a rational soul using an earthly and mortal body."* This mode of definition is given with some diversity of terms, by Origen,

* S. August., *De Moribus Ecclesiæ Cath.*, c. xxvii. n. 52.

Arnobius, St. Methodius, St. Basil, St. Gregory of Nyssa, St. Ambrose, and St. Gregory the Great.*

Seeing the use made of the Aristotelian definition by the materialists of France, at an early period of this century, the celebrated Viscount de Bonald wrote a defence of the form of definition here adopted that is worthy of attention. "I venture," he says, "to assert that this definition, 'man is an intelligence served by organs,' presents the first of creatures under the noblest, simplest, and most extensive point of view; that it brings all that man is by nature and by reason within the compass and prevision of an axiom of science. It expresses the two substances of which man is composed in their union and distinction. It exhibits both the principle and the moral reason of their union, and expresses the superiority of the intelligent soul over the body, as the soul is ordained to command and the body to serve."

We may remark, however, that if the author had expressed the two substances instead of leaving them to be inferred from the properties of intelligence and organization, his definition, like that of the Fathers cited above, would have been more perfect and complete. But his remarks on the Aristotelian definition are worth listening to. "The definition," he says, "that calls man a rational animal, is not sufficient to distinguish that noble creature, especially in days where there is a disposition to maintain that animals are endowed with intelligence and reason. This definition reverses the order of the faculties, putting the part of man that receives movement before that which gives movement. It reverses the eternal order of being in putting matter before spirit. But the definition that puts the intelligent part first, and that designates man by what is noblest in him, makes the intelligence the master, and the corporal organs the servants; and reminds the man that he must cultivate his intelligence to maintain the natural superiority of the soul over the body; and that he must exercise the bodily organs to make them serviceable to his intelligence; in short, that he ought not suffer them to behave like a riotous mob, and to usurp the place of intelligence."†

But to know man truly we must know what is noblest in him, and what is the final object or end for which he has received that noble gift. We should have a very defective knowledge

* See Klee's *History of Dogmas.*

† De Bonald, *Rechérches Philosophiques*, c. v.

of the horse or the dog, if we knew nothing of their relations with man. We should have an equally defective knowledge of any instrument or machine, if we knew not for what object or purpose they were invented. Not to know the ultimate object or final end for which man is created, is to leave the principle of his constitution unaccounted for; whilst to know him in his ultimate object is to know him in his first principle. The noblest thing in man as a creature is the image of God, and he is created in the image of God because he is made for union with God. The knowledge of this is the science of human life.

The profane speculators, whose theories of man we have quoted, think to know him best when they separate him as a subject from his object, when they detach man from God; but this is like separating the earth from the sun, it leaves us in the dark. We must get above these never-ending disputes and opinions, which come of refusing to hear the voice of Him who made man, and who alone has the perfect knowledge of what He has made, and for what purpose He has exercised His creative power. "Man partakes of all creatures," as Theophylact observes, "and he is the most perfect of them; but there is something in him yet more sublime."* It is this something in him yet more sublime, which can alone explain his nature, and what that is we must go to his Creator to learn.

In the first chapter of Genesis we read: "And God made the beasts of the earth according to their kind, and cattle and everything that creepeth on the earth, after its kind. And God saw that it was good. And he said: Let us make man to our image and likeness; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping thing that moveth on the earth. And God created man to his own image; to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them. And God blessed them, saying: increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it." Then to show that man is made of two distinct substances, the one earthly, the other spiritual, the sacred Scripture adds these words: "And the Lord God formed man of the slime of the earth, and breathed into his face the breath of life, and man became a living soul."

Here is a creation distinct and apart from that of the animal

* Theophylact, *In Lucam*, c. x.

world, of a being who receives dominion over that world. It is most clearly stated that each order of the animal world was created after its kind, and in none of those kinds is man included. After all the kinds of animal life are created, there is a pause, and then the last epoch of creation is introduced, and before man is made, there is a solemn deliberation of more than one person in the Divine Creator. The father of all things speaks to an equal within Himself, who is also man's Creator. We hear the words : "Let *us* make man to *our* image and likeness." The Divine artist moulds the body of man, not from some pre-existing animal, but from the finer particles of the earth. His spirit is a separate creation, nearer to God as spirit is more like to God. This creative act is expressed by the term breathing, as expressing both the formation of the spirit and the communication to that spirit of spiritual light and life. Man rose up from the earth "a living soul," after the image and likeness of God. He received more than a natural life, he received that life of grace that brought him into a living communion with God as his final end.

The Sacred Record carefully adds the words : "To the image of God he created him, male and female he created them ;" making it clear against all Rabbinical or Mahometan cavil, that the two sexes were equally created to the image of God, and have consequently one and the same divine end.

Here then we come at the true dignity of man, as well as to his chief distinction. The image of God enters into the composition of his nature, and is therefore ineffaceable. This noble prerogative exalts him into an order so immeasurably above that of the animal world, that there can be no kind of equality between them. For as every part of the man belongs to his personality, it shares in his highest prerogatives. But his spiritual nobility ascends higher in degree in proportion to the grace and benignity with which the Sovereign Lord of man exalts this image by His grace into the likeness of the Eternal Majesty, in raising him from virtue to virtue. Every other distinction fades before the grandeur of this divine resemblance, for which the image of God is the natural preparation. But this likeness is a supernatural gift, for it is far above the force of nature, and is implanted as a living seal from the divine light upon the faith of man, and as a fiery impress from the divine charity upon his soul, that he may be able to love God above all things.

The prerogative of bearing God's image in his soul constitutes the capacity of man for receiving His likeness, and of coming into union with Him. Proclaimed to be his chief distinction at his creation, it is repeated on other solemn occasions, that it may be always kept in sight. In recording the genealogy of the race of Adam for the first time, the Scripture begins with this heading: "This is the book of the generation of Adam. In the day that God created him, he made him in the image of God." When the sacredness of human life was first violated by Cain, the greatness of the crime was shown to consist in the violation of God's image. "Whosoever shall shed man's blood, his blood shall be shed; because man was made in the image of God." The Book of Wisdom associates this image of God with the soul's immortality: "God created man incorruptible, and to the image of his own likeness He made him."

Taking this profounder view of the nature of man, St. Basil defines him to be "a rational creature made to the image of his Creator."* St. Gregory of Nyssa defines him as "a creature of God endowed with reason and made to God's image."† Although St. Athanasius begins his descriptive definition of man from his animal nature, he takes the highest theological measure of him. "Man," he says, "is an animal endowed with intellect, and with a sense of the Divine mind, although mortal through the spoliation of the body. He is intelligent through the principality of the mind as he is a partaker of the Divinity."‡ St. Augustine, in like manner, places the dignity of man in the image of God. "Great indeed is man's dignity," he says, "because he bears the image of God, and beholds God's countenance within him, and through contemplation has God ever present with him."§

But the Psalmist says: "Man, when he was in honour, did not understand: he was compared to foolish beasts, and was made like to them." He was exalted in honour above the animal world, which was subjected to his dominion, but by deserting his spiritual dignity he makes himself like the animals. On this text St. Basil has a comment which shows how great man is when he cleaves to God, and how degraded when he cleaves to his own

* S. Basil, *Hexameron*, *Hom.* 10.
† S. Greg. Nyssa, *Orat.* 1. *in Verb. Faciamus hom.*
‡ S. Athanas., *De Communi Essentia*, n. 53.
§ S. August., *De Spiritu et Anima.*

inferior nature. "Man is a great thing," he says, "and a precious thing is the merciful man; he has his excellence and dignity in his own constitution. What earthly thing besides him is made in its Creator's image? He has power and command over every living thing, on earth, in the air and the waters. He is a little lower than the angels, because he is united to a body that God made from the earth, whereas He made His ministers a flame of fire. But man most certainly knows his Creator, for God breathed into his face, and gave him through that breathing some part of His grace, that like might know like. Yet when he was so greatly honoured as to be created in God's image, when in greater honour than the heavens, the sun, or the stars—for what image of God have things without mind or will? in this great honour he did not understand. He neglected following his Creator that he might be like to Him, and became the slave of his cupidities, and was compared to foolish beasts, and became like to them. It is the heaping of folly, it is a bestial want of sense, for man made in God's image, to have no care to understand the great and many mysteries dispensed for his advantage. When he forgets these, he discards the heavenly image to take up with the earthly one."*

How shall we draw the distinction between the image and the likeness of God in man? These are two distinct terms, and as St. Augustine remarks, God would not use two distinct terms one after the other to express one and the same thing. We have no right, observes St. Gregory of Nyssa, to accuse the Scriptures of putting a second word without intending a second meaning. An image is a distant resemblance; a likeness is a resemblance in life. We have the image of a man in his statue, it is like him in form and proportion, but the statue is devoid of life. We have the likeness of a man in his son, who resembles him in life as well as in form. The image of God is formed in the constitution of the human soul. But the likeness of God, which rests in resemblance of life, is derived from God through the implanted gift of His divine grace, which is an element above his nature, and by responding to which, man is raised to a supernatural life in God. The image of God is according to man's reason; but the likeness of God is according to the divine gift. The image is according to truth; but the likeness is according to love in the truth; for truth

* S. Basil, *Hom. in Psalm*, xlviii.

is form, and love is life. Man is in the image of God, therefore, in so far as he is rational; and in the likeness of God in so far as he is spiritual.

Let us speak first of the image, and then of the likeness. The image of God is expressed in the one and threefold character of the soul. We must here lay down the fundamental principle, that spiritual unity is perfected in distinction. What is incapable of distinction can never have that rich and high order of unity which embraces perfect distinction of number in perfect unity. Boetius made the profound remark, that there is no perfect unity without plurality. Plurality is essential to intellectual and moral life. Three united in one, forms a more absolute order of unity than the rudimental unit which is incapable of distinction. Hence the maxim that every *triune* is perfect. The difficulty of realizing this truth to the understanding arises from the obtruding of material images through the imagination when we are thinking of spiritual life. Yet there are many reflections of this unity in plurality in nature. For example, a triangle presents a more perfect unity than one of its lines, a circle than one of its points, a cube than one of its planes. The features of the human countenance in their entire harmony, are more expressive of the unity of life than any one of them taken separately; but if there is internal division it will be otherwise, because the countenance reflects the soul. This unity is the secret of the beauty and sweetness of spiritual faces.

God is not a solitary Being. He has an infinite society in His own divine nature. His action is infinite, His knowledge of Himself is infinite, His love of His own most perfect Being and Intelligence is infinite. Here are three infinitudes in one perfect nature. The first principle of God's infinite action is His power; the terminal of His knowledge is His wisdom; the terminal of His power and wisdom is His goodness. His power is infinite, His wisdom is infinite, and His goodness is infinite; yet these three distinctions exist in the one infinite spiritual nature and indivisible substance of the One Eternal God. But power is not knowledge, nor is knowledge will; the will moves, knowledge is the law of movement, power is the source of movement. Without the three nothing can be effected, nothing can be perfected in spiritual life and action. If you think of God as He is Almighty and unchangeable in Himself, although He moves all

things, that is His power. If you think of God as all-seeing, all-providing, and all-judging, that is His wisdom. If you think of God as all-loving, compassionate, and merciful, that is His goodness. To the Father we ascribe power, to the Son wisdom, and to the Holy Spirit goodness. The Father is the fountain of wisdom and goodness as well as of power. The Son is the generated wisdom inseparable from that power and goodness. The Holy Spirit is the goodness breathed in love from the Father and the Son, and is inseparable from that power and wisdom.

The Father is the fontal principle of all. His perfect knowledge of Himself is one absolute and complete conception, which constitutes the Word of His power, and is another self within His bosom—one with Him in substance, and co-equal with Him. The Word of the Father is His Son, the express image of the Father's substance, and the character of His glory, both eternally of His contemplation. In contemplating the whole perfection of His Being in His Son, the Father infinitely loves the Son, and the Son the Father; whence from the Father, and through the Son, and therefore from the Son as well, the Holy Spirit proceeds in that infinite breathing of love, the third person of the Sacred Trinity, in whom the perfection of the divine life is completed. For the Holy Spirit is co-equal and consubstantial with the Father and the Son. Through the Father's power all things are created; through the Son's wisdom all intelligent creatures are illuminated; through the Holy Spirit's love all spirits are perfected that partake of His sanctity, whether in Heaven or on earth. Yet, though we ascribe these works to the three divine persons severally, they are each the work of the whole adorable Trinity, whose operations are inseparable.

Profound beyond the intelligence of every created intellect, is the unfathomable mystery of the Holy Trinity; and he who searches into its Majesty will be overwhelmed with its glory. Yet, although the Holy Trinity is the mystery of mysteries, and the source of all the mysteries that prove the limitation of our reason, a certain knowledge of that mystery is vouchsafed to our faith. Our first preparation for that knowledge is laid in the constitution of our soul as created in the image of God; but the revelation of that mystery is given to our faith. The best of the ancient philosophers obtained a certain perception that the soul of man is one in nature and three in powers; but when the

mystery of the Divine Trinity became fully revealed to us, the light of that unspeakable mystery enabled us to see with clear ness the triune constitution of our own soul; and, to use the words of St. Augustine: "Whilst we see the trinity in ourselves, we believe without seeing the Trinity of God."

For in the human soul there are three fundamental powers in one spiritual nature, and this constitutes the soul in the image of God. In the Holy Trinity there is a fontal principle of all things, which St. Athanasius calls "the treasury of life and intelligence." And in the human soul there is the receptive mind, endowed with the light of principles, and stored with all the truth and images of truth that have been presented to its wonderful capacity. This fontal mind the Fathers call the memory, which is not the mere faculty of remembering, but the treasury of the mind, out of which we call things by remembering. This storehouse or treasury of light and truth, this memory, is the first of the three powers of the soul.

But it is one thing to have this treasure of light and truth in the mind, it is another thing to bring it out by conception or thought into our understanding, so that we may see with our understanding what is contained in our mind; just as it is one thing to have a truth in our mind, and another to see it in writing before our eyes. For as it is one thing to have a truth in our mind, and another to put it in words, so it is one thing to have that truth in our mind, and another to have it in our understanding. But when we draw a truth from our mind into our understanding, that which is in the understanding is the word or image of that which is in the mind. Observe, for instance, when any one calls your attention to something that you ought to know, you search your memory, that something you at last see, and then you say: now I understand. This word of understanding is an image of the truth in your mind. The understanding is the second power of the soul, and is generated from the first.

As the Father by His intelligence contemplates His infinite wealth of perfection, He generates His Word, the eternal image of Himself, so the mind or memory of man produces the power of understanding, that interior word of our soul which we call our conception, or our thought, which is the living image of things. This animated picture of things conceived in the understanding from the mind, St. Augustine calls "the son of thy heart." It is

the spiritual generation of the word of understanding from the truth stored in the memory.

But whatever good we understand through our mind, we love with our will. Thus, from the treasury of our memory, through the act of our understanding, our will, which is our third power, is set in motion. But this third power of our soul resembles the third person of the Blessed Trinity. For from the Father, who is the fontal treasure of the Trinity, and from the Son, who is the Word or image of His infinite intelligence, proceeds the Spirit of love, who is the final term of the divine operations.

As the Father loses nothing by what He communicates to the Son, so our memory loses nothing by what it communicates to the understanding, but is always fertile. As the Holy Spirit neither diminishes the Father nor the Son in proceeding from them, neither does our will diminish by its love either the light of truth in our memory, or the word of truth conceived in our understanding, but each fertilises the other.*

These three powers, the memory, understanding, and will, act together in the one simple and indivisible substance of the soul. The memory is receptive of truth, the understanding does not conceive the truth without the will, the will does not act without the understanding. And although in imperfect souls these three powers are unequal, and act unequally, yet, as St. Augustine observes, in perfect souls they act equally. This equality is the secret of that peace and harmony which reign in perfect souls. For the love of the will and the contemplation in the understanding are at one with the most perfect good presented to the mind. But when we compare the trinity of powers in the human soul with the Trinity of persons in God, to quote the words of an ancient Father: "God is so far above the human soul, that in Him all goodness and the sweetness of all goodness is from Himself; whilst in the creature, both what he is and the whole manner of what he is, is from God."

From the image of God in man let us pass to the likeness. This likeness is a life-like resemblance to God. The image of God, as we have said, is the natural preparation for His likeness, which is supernatural. The first foundation for this divine likeness is the supernatural gift of faith, and the inspiration of hope; but the likeness itself is in the supernatural gift of charity, giving to the

* See Bossuet's admirable sermon *Sur la Sainte Trinité.*

soul the life of divine love. When these gifts are freely accepted by the mind and will, and freely worked with, they draw the soul towards God in faith, hope, and charity, whereby we enter into the light of eternal truth, are inspired with trust in God's promises, and are animated with the love of God. The love of God is the life of the soul, and then faith becomes the light of love, and hope looks to the consummation of that love.

St. Gregory of Nyssa has so well expressed the difference between the image and likeness of God, that we shall here abridge his words: "The image," he says, "is in creation, the likeness is in election. As we have the image of God already, that image calls upon our will and choice to seek His likeness. Yet, unless God give us the power, we can never ascend to His likeness by our own strength. He makes us to be like Him by giving us the power to become like Him. But He has left to us the task of working ourselves into that likeness; and that we may not lose the praise that is its due, He has left to us the reward of that likeness. If you see a good portrait, a faithful representation of the original, you give your praise to the artist more than to the work; and that you may have the praise of it rather than another, God has left it to you to form yourself to His likeness. As it is from God's image that you are endowed with reason, it is by His likeness that you are made good. When you hear Christ saying: 'Be ye perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect,' you know that He invites us to become His likeness. . . . . Whence comes grace? How art thou crowned? If thy Creator gives thee everything, how art thou to reach Heaven? He hath given thee one resemblance, He has left the other incomplete, that by perfecting thyself thou mayest become capable of receiving His reward. How then are we to be made like to God? Through the Gospel, for what is the being a Christian but the being made like to God, even as far as nature can receive the likeness. But how canst thou put on Christ unless thou receive the mark of Christ? Unless thou receive His baptism? Unless thou accept the garment of incorruption?"*

The object of an image is to carry us to its original, and its significance is in what it represents. St. Hilary says in his profound work on the Trinity, that "as the sovereign imprints his image on the coin, so God imprints His image on man, with a

* S. Greg. Nyssa, *Orat. in Verb. Faciamus hominem.*

likeness proportioned to the depth of the impression."* But the life of God is love, and the likeness of His life is love in the living image looking towards the divine original. We are only like to God in the degree of charity which God implants in grace, and by which we love Him in virtue of that grace. The image of God is therefore transformed into His likeness in proportion to the earnestness with which we draw near to God in our affections, and thereby receive more from Him of the principle of life. But the true test of the amount and intensity of this spiritual life of divine love, is less in our sensibilities than in the calm vigour of our will, as it enters more completely into the will of God; is less in the consciousness of ourselves than in the consciousness of having God with us; and in the greater subjection of our nature to God, proving the generous devotion of our love.

The two enemies of this divine likeness are pride and sensuality. Pride turns from God and looks to self; in its venial form it disturbs the divine likeness, in its virulent and mortal form it utterly effaces that likeness. The sensual life, which is the carnal form of selfishness, blurs, defiles, or utterly effaces the bright resemblance with the disordered stainings of concupiscence. For, as St. Augustine says with his usual profundity: "It is not because a man remembers himself, knows himself, and loves himself, that he is the image of God; he is truly the image of God in so far only as he looks towards his Original, and reflects that Divine Original of whom he is the image. He is like to God in so far as his memory, understanding, and will look towards God, and move towards God."

St. Thomas gives the three degrees in which we move towards God in these terms: "First, there is the appetite to know and love God that is formed in our nature. Secondly, there is the actual or habitual knowledge and love of God, formed by grace in our soul. Thirdly, there is the soul advanced to the image and likeness of God's glory. The first image is in all men; the second is in the just; the third is in the blessed."† In this world the likeness of the just to God is still obscure, because the soul reflects not the divine vision; but in Heaven the blessed have the obscuring veil removed, and the likeness will be

* S. Hilar. *De Trinitate*, L. II. c. ii.

† S. Thom. *Sum. l. q.* xciii. *a.* 1.

perfected; as St. Paul says: "We shall be like to him, because we shall see him as he is."

We must not however suppose that God is like us because we are like to Him. We have received but a created, communicated, and limited likeness, and that not in a divine but in a human subject. The One All-perfect Being cannot be compared with any subject, however good and enlightened, for every created subject is external to His infinite perfection. On this essential distinction, the Book on the Divine Names ascribed to St. Dionysius speaks as follows: "The theologians say, that God, the Being who is very being, the Being above all, is like to no one. But He gives likeness to them who turn with all their power to Him who is above all definition and reason; and the force and virtue of this resemblance attracts created things to their Creator. It must therefore be said, that they who are formed to the image and likeness of God, have resemblance to God, but not that God is like to them. For even man is not like his picture."*

But the picture is like the man; and although God's image in man is at an infinite distance from what God is, yet because the Most Holy Trinity has formed that image in our creation, and has established that likeness by His grace, they cannot but be most noble and excellent, especially as the three powers of the soul reflect in their degree the three persons of the Holy Trinity, and imitate their action. The persons of the Holy Trinity appeared therefore at our creation, saying with one accord: "Let us make man to our own image and likeness." The three persons of the Holy Trinity are heard again in our regeneration, when we are baptised in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. For as in the beginning the Father created all things through the Son, and the Holy Spirit, brooding over the waters, brought all things to their order and perfection; in like manner for our restoration Christ tells us: "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." For by the Father's power the Son both creates and regenerates; by His own wisdom the Son enlightens, and by the Holy Spirit's love, life is made perfect. Moreover, in all subsequent sacraments, sacramentals, and prayers, that raise the soul above herself, and brighten and transform her into greater likeness of God, the three Divine Persons in one God are unceasingly invoked.

* *De Divinis Nominibus*, c. ix.

Here then we behold what grand relations exist between the mysteries of the human soul and the eternal mysteries of God. We begin to comprehend with some clearness how man is a subject created for an object; how God Himself is the true object of man, and the final end of man; and how mysteriously man is created and prepared for that final end. Bearing God's image from our Creator, and raised anew to the lost likeness of God by regeneration, the inward man recovers his just relations with God, and the beginning of that eternal life for which he was made. At our creation the mystery of the Divine Trinity was obscurely revealed, but in our regeneration, that greatest of mysteries, the key to the mysteries of our own soul, was fully revealed to us. Then the Son of God replaced us in our original dignity, directed us anew to our final end, and repaired in us that image of the Trinity, which we received on our creation, but which sin had weakened and deformed.

Nevertheless, there are still profound mysteries in the soul of man, of which God alone holds the secret. Of this every one who gravely reflects within himself is conscious. The more he examines himself the more will every one become conscious that the interior man is something incalculably greater than the exterior man; and that he has even already lights, aspirations, and relations with an invisible order of things that extend to what is infinite and eternal. In those invisible elements of his soul, he discovers the higher principles of his humanity, compared with which, the material body, and the interests of this visible world, are but the prison walls and the chains of a captive, who yearns for that open freedom in which all his powers may reach their object, and all his affections their exercise.

To separate what is mysterious in man from what is obvious, and to attempt his reconstruction by a process of elimination, is the most unphilosophic, the most unscientific, of all methods of investigation. The materialists know well, that in their own proper science of matter, they cannot put aside the unknown qualities and quantities for which they are unable to account. If some scientists give their thoughts so exclusively to material things, and immerse their minds in material imagery, until they can no longer recognize the operations of spiritual natures, not even their own; there is another class who pursue their mental

abstractions, and who live so exclusively on the phenomena of their mind and imagination, that they no longer recognize material substance. Turned from God upon themselves, and involved within their own shadows, they see not half themselves; confounding the subjective mind with the objective truth, they sink into the miserable gulf of pantheistic delusion. But whether by dwelling exclusively in sense and losing sight of soul, men become materialists; or whether by dwelling exclusively in mental abstractions men lose sight of matter, and become phenomenists; or whether by confounding subject with object, they become pantheists; they in each case present us with a monster at which our reason revolts, and which our common sense refuses to recognize as man. The positivists, by a similar deficiency of intellectual light, confound God with universal humanity, but with a humanity that they pronounce to be mortal in every part, yet they impiously set up this humanity for our deification. What can we learn from these dreary, barren, and inflated speculations, but that, as we have said already, we stand in need of Christian humility to know both God and ourselves?

The Almighty, whose happiness cannot be increased, because He is perfect, and cannot be diminished, because He is unchangeable, from no necessity, but from pure goodness, has created two orders of intelligent spirits. Their happiness depends upon their acknowledging the grace of their Creator, through which alone they can be glorified. He has been pleased to give them in their first creation an intimation in shadow of what, through his divine condescension, He would finally make them. In contemplating those countless spirits, He ordained that some of them should remain in their purely spiritual nature, whilst others, in their creation, should be clothed with earthly bodies, causing earth itself to vegetate and be animated with life, by the force of the spirit to which they are united. Through this intimate society of body with spirit in one life, God has shown the possibility of a future condition in which man shall be glorified. For if the Lord and Giver of life can frame the rude elements of this earth into a body, receiving life from the spirit that dwells within it as a mansion, it cannot be impossible for Him to exalt the spirit herself into a living abode of His Holy Spirit, and to make her the partaker of His glory. If again, such a pleasure and a joy can be obtained in this mortal life from the presence of the soul

in the corruptible body, how much pleasure and joy may we not expect from the presence of God in the soul.

If, in this present dispensation, our spirit is brought down into the humble society of an earthly body, and is made a spectacle to the universe of intelligent spirits, God has nevertheless decreed to bring all the souls that do His will, together with their glorified bodies, into the society of those angelic spirits who have kept their purity; and what we have received less than those spirits in our creation, will be made up in the grace of glorification. Upon both orders of spirits, upon the angels who stood firm in their purity in Heaven, and upon the souls placed in earthly bodies in this world, their Divine Creator imposed a command and a law for their obedience. He commanded the angels to stand firm in the truth, and not to desert their principality; He commanded the souls on earth to look up to Him, and to seek Him with all their mind and spirit; that the one order by not falling from Heaven, and the other by ascending to Heaven, might advance from the condition in which they were created unto the Supreme Good for whom they were created, and might dwell everlastingly together with the God by whom they were created.*

* See Hugo de S. Victore, *De Sacramentis*, pars. I. c. i.

LECTURE II.

WHY MAN IS MADE TO THE IMAGE OF GOD.

"Jesus said to them: Whose image and inscription is this? They say to him: Cæsar's. Then he said to them: Render therefore to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and to God the things that are God's."—MATTHEW xxii.

THE coin of the realm is the creation of the sovereign; it proceeds from his authority and is called in by his authority, in token of which it bears his image and the inscription of his name. The soul of man is the spiritual creation of God, and, what is incomparably greater, the soul is created for union with God, of which she bears the sign in the image of God, and in the inscription of His law, graved with light upon her spirit. The image and name of the sovereign are cast on perishable metal, but whilst the metal lasts it asserts his sovereign claim. The soul received from God bears His image and His law, the signet of His sovereign claim upon that soul. The coin of the sovereign bears his image on the surface; the image of God is in the inmost constitution of the soul, the soul herself is that image, and the light of God's law sealed therein, is the direction of the soul to her Divine Original.

"Let us make man to our own image and likeness." In these creative words we read the constitution of the human soul: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, and with thy whole soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." This is the interpretation of the law written within the soul. The inscription explains the image.

It is an obvious principle that whatever is made, is the subject of its maker. It is another universal principle, founded in the nature of things, that whatever is made, is made for something greater than itself. The inventor of a machine makes it for the

use and service of man. The builder of a house looks to man's accommodation. The planter of a tree has his own use or pleasure in view. The artist makes not his picture for itself, but to give instruction and delight, to awaken the feeling of beauty or sublimity in the human mind. The author has not the book for his end, but the enlightenment of his readers. All material things are for the service of spiritual life. That the meat is for the body, and the body for the life, is beyond dispute or question. That the soul of man is made for something far greater than herself, every one can see who chooses to compare what the soul is with what the soul desires. She has the capacity for infinite things; she feels their attraction, and her own impulse towards them. Her great wants are the measure of the great things for which she is made.

The principle that everything is made for something greater than itself, involves the great principle of final causes. The doctrine of final causes is but the expression of that principle; for the final cause of anything is the object or end for which it is made, or for which it is done.

The exclusion of final causes from scientific investigation is the destruction of what is most noble in knowledge, and the cause of a great amount of that infidel theorising which besets the scientific men of our age. Nothing has so much darkened the speculations of the sophists of recent times, who bring up the works of God against God Himself, as this rejection of final causes. They do not cease to exist because excluded from thought, and to reject them from consideration is to strive against one of the most fundamental and indestructive principles of common sense; but it is the character of sophistry to contend against common sense.

We cannot understand the nature of anything until we know the ultimate end for which it exists; that end is both the reason of its existence and the reason of its being what it is. It has some object for which it exists, and it is formed and shaped with reference to that object. To make anything or do anything without an object and end is to act without reason or intelligence. And to be ignorant of the relations established between any subject and its final object, between created beings and the ends for which God destines them, is to be ignorant both of the first and of the last reason of their existence. For the object or end for which anything is made is the first consideration, the first intention in the mind of its maker, who shapes and forms his work with a view to

that end. The man who devised the locomotive steam engine contemplated the rapid movement of a train of carriages from place to place. This was his immediate object. But his final object was to transfer passengers and goods from place to place with rapidity and security. Everything in the engine, road, and carriages, was so devised as to be the most effective to this end, and the end explains the construction of the engine and all the rest. It was not made for itself, but for the service of man.

I have deliberately used the name sophist instead of philosopher for those sciolists who reject the consideration of final ends from their investigations into the nature of things, because philosophy is the love of wisdom, and wisdom is concerned with the first and final cause of things, or with the Supreme Good. The distinction is a very old one. And Varro classed the old philosophers in writing their history according to their view of the Supreme Good, that is, according to their view of the final end of man and the creation. But whoever rejects final causes is not entitled to be called a lover of wisdom, because he rejects both the wisdom of things and the wisdom of their Creator, and so cannot have them in his knowledge.

God made the earth for man. He made it for the first stage of human life, and as a place of probation for a higher and nobler life in another sphere of existence. The earth with its surrounding sphere supplies him with his body, his habitation, his nourishment, his instruction, his pleasure, and his trials. As a place of probation and discipline, it must, if it is to accomplish that object, present him with difficulties, both mental, physical, and moral; and with obstacles to be overcome; and with things to be denied as well as with things to be accepted; and with pains as well as pleasures; because all these things belong to probation and moral discipline, and to the exercise of the virtues, of which faith, hope, patience, self-denial, humility and charity are the chief.

But man is made for God. He is therefore so formed in all his spiritual nature as to make him capable of union with God. But this union he obtains as a free agent, and by using the means which God puts at his disposal. These means are partly natural and partly supernatural, the natural being subordinate to the supernatural, which alone can bring him to his final end. God is therefore the final as well as the first cause of man, and it is this which explains his nature, and gives to him his nobleness. And

as the inferior creation was made for the service of man, and man was made for God, God is the ultimate end of all things. Hence the Scripture says that "God made all things for Himself."

Nothing demands to be more carefully distinguished than the difference between intermediate objects and ends, and the final object and end of man; because intermediate ends are but the means placed at our disposal to help us towards our final end. All moral errors spring either from our taking intermediate objects for our final end, or from taking the wrong means for gaining our final end. We either blindly mistake the one true and final object of our soul in practice, choosing the less good for which we were not made for the greater good for which we were made; or we take other means of our own choosing in place of those which God has provided, and which alone are effective, to bring us to God as our final end. But in either case we become failures.

The whole wisdom of things is in their final end, which is the first and last reason of their existence. Without this knowledge we are incapable of rising to the grandeur of God's eternal plan, and have no key to His providence. We cannot understand the Divine patience that waits upon the works of His wisdom, and gives to the things of time their due course of time to obtain their ultimate results in eternity. Looking at each thing, or each order of things, in their mere subjective condition, and as though they were isolated, whereas they are all related, our minute philosophers, having no wise regard to their final ends, are mentally engaged in separating all that God has united in mutual relations and just dependencies, and destroy the cosmical order of the universe. This is the mortal weakness that cleaves like a blinding veil to a great deal of modern science, than which nothing has done more to bring down the minds of men from their just elevation, and to eclipse their views of the amplitude and the splendour of God's design in the creation. Not only do these minute philosophers make an isolation between the creation and its final cause, but they isolate it from its history, whether the records thereof be human or divine, and so reject the study of God's providence. Yet are they ever ready with their small facts and large imagination to reconstruct both man and the universe.

Let us return to the final cause of man, and consider how God has prepared his nature for its final end. The difference between what we are at this moment, and what with our inmost aspirations

we long to be, must be measured by our capacity. How wonderful is the capacity of the human mind for truth! Who can circumscribe its boundaries? It extends over worlds and their contents, over time and its histories, over science with all its facts and theories. It reaches up to truths that are infinite, unchangeable and eternal. But how comes a creature so limited in time, place, and substantive existence, and so changeable withal, to obtain perception of eternal and unchangeable truth? We see that truth as from a distance, we salute its presence from afar off, we desire its nearer approach, we confess that we are still far away from its perfect illumination. And yet this eternal truth seems less distant from our mind than from our power of understanding.

Our will, that free and spontaneous power of the soul to desire, to resolve, to act, and to love, in our present condition, is in some respects more capacious than our mind. Its object is both truth and good, and we can desire more truth than we see, and long for more good than the truth we know reflects to us. The object of the will is unlimited good; unlimited truth is welcome therefore to the will, as the bright shadow cast towards us from unlimited good, awakening our desire for its presence. The light of faith is the argument of eternal things unseen; hope stretches with desire towards those things unseen; and love embraces the eternal good as yet unseen with the desire of possession. The love for eternal good reveals both the capacity and the appetite for that good; makes us wise in the judgment of the truth that leads to that good; and wise in using the means that advance us to our supreme good. Our capacity of soul, therefore, for loving infinite good is in nowise more limited than our capacity of mind for infinite and eternal truth. Yet by a certain contact of soul with the grace of eternal good, we can often embrace more with desire and love than we can see with our understanding.

However he may hold to the world by the body, man is certainly not made for this world, were it but for this reason, that his soul is so much greater than this material world with all that it contains. The world in fact is made for him. He is housed in a mortal body that with all repairing lasts but a short time. His soul ripens whilst his body decays. An intellectual creature is of another order of being than things without mental light, as a person among impersonal creatures there is no comparison between

them. The Scriptures, the philosophers, the poets, the examples of history and the whole voice of human experience, unite in teaching us, that after man has gained every object of ambition in this world, his hopes are defeated by his success. He has simply gained the knowledge that the wants of his soul are of another kind. In the hour in which he enters into himself, if he have such an hour, the truth comes back to him with all the force of experience: "What doth it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul; or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?"

The loss of the soul is not the loss of her existence, but the loss of her good. To lose that eternal good for which the soul was made, is truly to lose the soul, which is but a poor subject when deprived of its objective good. Yet the image of God in that soul cannot perish, for that would be the destruction of the soul.

Secretly or openly, that image of God will make its presence known through all encumbrances, and will confess its Divine Original, even in reprobation tending towards greater reprobation.

If prosperity in this world fails to bring back that image to God, sufferings and privations may achieve what prosperity has failed to do. When this world is loved too much, it obscures the image of God; when loved with passion it effaces His likeness; and as this image and likeness are the noblest qualities of manhood, the very manhood of man is lowered and debased in proportion to the lowering of that image and the effacing of that likeness.

Let us put this clearly once for all, in doing which we shall borrow the language of a profound theologian. The human soul, created by God, and capable of God, finds nothing among created things, however rich or beautiful, that can really make her happy. They cannot enter into competition with the Divine Goodness, who is pleased in His condescension to be the one predeterminate object of human happiness. If you impress the image of a seal in soft wax, and then put some other kind of seal upon that which has already been deeply imprinted, you will not succeed in giving that new impression, but will only spoil the one already made. But if you take the first seal, and fit it into the impression anew, it will exactly correspond in all its reliefs to the hollows left by the first impression. Impress that seal with greater force, and the image of that seal will have greater depth and vividness. So in creating the soul of man, God imprinted his image upon her as with his own

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divine seal, producing His likeness, and leaving those hollows in her spiritual powers, that can only be filled up and fitted to make her happy by the reliefs of his own divine perfection ; and whenever the impression of the image from that divine seal is renewed with greater force, the form of that divine image enters more sharply into the soul, and penetrates to greater depths. But if you let any created thing try to seal its image in your spiritual nature, so as to affect you with the attachment of a greater affection, the beautiful image of God will be blurred and spoiled ; and the soul, made neither of wax or other earthly matter, will feel herself oppressed and deformed. This is the reason why a man may abound in wealth and earthly delights, and yet be subject to trouble, disgust, and sadness. But what sort of happiness is that which cannot keep trouble, disgust, and sadness at a distance?*

The reason of this is as clear as it is exalted, and is thus expressed by St. Thomas : "The will is the human appetite, and the object of the will is universal good, and this is not to be found in any creature, but only in God ; because no creature has anything more than a certain limited participation of good."† If man were made for this world, he would not be made in God's image but in the world's image, and his three concupiscences would constitute his three principal virtues, which, instead of disordering, darkening and staining his soul, as all men confess they do, would be his three crowning excellences, and, what is horrible to imagine, they would take the place of faith, hope, and charity in perfecting his character, giving peace to his powers, and redounding to his praise. But as the soul is not made in the world's image, but in God's image, God alone can perfect the soul. St. John had this truth in view when he exhorts us in these words : "Love not the world, nor the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the charity of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world is the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes and the pride of life, which is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the concupiscence thereof, but he that doeth the will of God, abideth for ever."

There is a very simple test for proving that man is not made for himself, and can never be his own good. When he has separated himself from God, let him be separated from this world ; shut him

* Brienza, *S. Tomaso Spiritual Direttore*, p. 1, c. xviii.

† S. Thom. Sum. 1, 2, q. 2, a. 8.

up in solitude, deprive him of society, of books, and of external nature, and he will pine and starve in misery and inanition. Feed him as you will, and still the question will be how long his mind will last without breaking down for want of objects on which to rest. Why do men weary of monotony, and weary the more if they have quickened their minds with large culture? It is because every limited thought and object wearies the soul after a short time, that is made for an infinite good. Man is the most dependent of all beings, because his capacity is so great in comparison with what he possesses. Whilst his body is dependent on God's providence in a thousand ways, his soul is dependent on God Himself for its light and spiritual good. Not being an object to himself, man is always in search of an object to which he may attach himself, on which he may rest, and in which he may find content. I say content, because content is fulness, and fulness leaves no suffering void. But man is the subject of God, bearing God's signature upon him as the wax bears the image of the seal, or as the mould bears the figure into which the molten gold is poured. The wax is subject to the seal, the mould to the gold, and man to God, who alone can content him, because He alone can fill his powers.

An empty vessel boasting its fulness is the figure of a soul that looks to herself for her completion. To strive to fare well upon herself and her environment is the very delirium of human pride, and reminds us of the miserable Ugolino gnawing with everlasting hunger upon the bare and bleeding skull of his destroyer. Self-love with her hungry offspring finds but a bare table when she turns to feed upon herself, and finds her chief fare in the bitter diet of disappointment. "Thy own wickedness shall reprove thee," says the prophet, "and thy apostasy shall rebuke thee. Know then, and see that it is an evil and a bitter thing for thee to have left thy God." When the soul turns herself from the Divine Fountain of light and the Eternal Source of her spiritual life, and trusts to herself for light and life, she suffers those pains of thirst and pangs of want that strain her spirit to the very roots, and harass her with the divining fears of greater miseries to come. No soul was ever made to live upon herself.

Because man is made for God, there is in his spiritual essence the rational image of the Supreme Life, the Divine Intelligence and the Sovereign Will of God: and by this constitution of his

spiritual nature he is fitted and prepared to partake by grace of that good which God is by nature. He is made to the image of God in his reason that he may become the likeness of God in His love. In reflecting God's truth, as a mirror reflects the light, he reflects the order of God's law, that he may delight in the virtues that make his own will resemble the will of God. For God made him thus, that he might know Him, and knowing Him might love Him, and loving Him might delight in Him, and delighting in Him might come to the open vision of God, and to that intimate union with Him which is the final end of all desires.

Wherefore the image of God is given to our nature to make us capable of God, and of eternal things. Framed in the substance of the soul, that image is a mirror, but a mirror that is living, spiritual, and highly sensitive. It is sensitive to the touches of that divine light of truth which is itself a luminous image of God; it is sensitive to the touches of divine grace, from the finger of God's Holy Spirit, which give the sense of God; and thus we obtain the deeper sense of His divine presence, and the more intimate consciousness of His loving communication. When, therefore, the warmth of His charity comes with the ray of His light, the soul is moved in her inward sense to ascend towards the Divine Author of her gifts, and is gratefully inclined to return love for love.

The sun shines upon our mortal bodies in three beneficent elements, giving light to the eyes, warmth to the system, and electric vigour to the nerves. Yet warmth comes not always with light, nor energy with warmth. The three elements are distinct from each other, at least in the medium through which they pass. So from the Father of lights, from whom is every good and perfect gift, we receive the light of faith, the life of justice, and the warmth of charity. The Psalmist has drawn the grand distinction between the gifts where he says: "The light of thy countenance is sealed upon us, O Lord; Thou hast given joy in my heart." The light seals the supernatural image of God upon the natural image already in the soul, and the gladness fills that image with the joy of life in the warmth of charity. Again, in his penitential Psalm, after recovery from his fall, the Psalmist prays: "Create a clean heart in me, O God; and renew a right spirit within me." He asks that his heart, the seat of God's love, may be *created* clean, but for his spirit he only asks that it may be *renewed* in rectitude. Rectitude of spirit comes of right reason, as Hugo

of St. Victor observes: but cleanness of heart comes of perfect charity.*

When we weigh the value of things by truth rather than imagination, we find the image of God in spiritual natures to be the grandest of all creations, and that in virtue of this image one individual soul is a nobler production than the sum of all the creations that have not this image. For by what test of excellence is any creature to be valued, except by its nearer resemblance to its Creator? We are not merely to estimate that image of the Holy Trinity by what it is now, but much more by what it is capable of becoming when it receives its fulness from the Holy Trinity.

Every work of God bears some signs of the character of the Divine Workman, such as its nature is capable of receiving. Even in the material creation we find certain traces and shadows of the power, wisdom, and goodness of God, and even traces that are unmistakably the work of the Holy Trinity. The composition of every work rests upon a threefold basis. Thus we see the threefold dimensions of space, and also the threefold dimensions of all matter resting in space; the three elements in light; the three primary colours; the three fundamental sounds or tones in music; the three fundamental states of matter, solid, fluid, or aerial; and so on through all nature, and through all art which copies nature. In material things such traces of the Holy Trinity can only be remote and lifeless. But when we come to the free and active power, intelligence and life in the human soul, we see the spiritual impress of the Holy Trinity in a spiritual substance, the three powers in one life, capable of divine and eternal things.

We may now resume much of what we have said in the instructive words of St. Augustine. "The rational creature," he says, "whether angel or human soul, is so constituted that it cannot be a good to itself. But if the changeable soul will turn herself to the unchangeable good, she will make her will good, and will be thus made happy. But if she turn herself from the unchangeable good, she will become miserable. To turn to this good is virtue; to turn from this good is vice. It is not our nature, then, that is evil, because the spiritual creature has rational life. Even when she deprives herself of that good to partake of which is happiness, and

* See Hugo de S. Victore, *De Sacramentis*, p. 6, c. i.

becomes vicious, the spiritual creature is still preferable to even the most perfect of material things, better even than the light of our eyes, which we know to be material. The least of spiritual creatures is incomparably more excellent than the most perfect of bodily things, not by reason of quantity, for that belongs only to bodies, but in virtue of a certain force by which the spiritual creature ascends to a much greater elevation, higher than the imagination, because the imagination is drawn from the senses, and the mind exercises itself upon it. Even bodies, and inferior bodies, such as earth, water, and air, become better by partaking of what is better, as when the light, for example, illuminates them, or heat makes them vegetate. But the spiritual and rational creature is made better by partaking of her Creator, and by cleaving to Him in pure and holy charity. When souls are wholly devoid of this charity they become darkened, and after the manner of a spiritual nature they grow hardened. Hence, unbelieving men are darkness, but when they turn to God, through a certain force of illumination they become light. And to such the Apostle says: 'Ye were darkness, but now light in the Lord.'"*

God has so configured our soul to His image, that our memory, which St. Augustine calls "the womb of the mind," and St. Isidore "the treasury of things," is nearest to God in communication. Our understanding actively seeks knowledge through the receptive mind or memory; and our will cleaves in assent to the truth which its Divine Author presents to us. This is the triune form of the soul, the three united powers in one spirit, that makes her the image of the Holy Trinity. The mind or memory receives the truth, the understanding elicits the truth and makes it knowledge, the will cleaves to the truth by its assent. When we follow this truth upwards to its divine source, it leads the soul on to God, and the truth itself is some reflection of the purity, the beauty, and the grandeur of God's Eternal Majesty. Every nature has its proper motion in its proper element. To the birds of the air wings are as feet, they soar at will on their light pinions into the regions of light, where they expand themselves in gladness. God gives wings to the soul in the gift of light, by the help of which she rises at will into the regions of divine truth, where her heart may expand in joy in the warmth of eternal charity.

* S. August. *De Gratia Nov. Test.* c. xxxiii.

Yet nothing can rise by its natural force above itself; to effect this a greater force must descend from a higher power. Man is by nature capable of God, but by nature alone he cannot enter into union with God. He must first receive a divine element, that through its means the image of God may be brought to His living likeness, and he may have that within him which may dispose him for union with God. For as mere created nature is at an infinite remove from the divine perfection, the divine element of grace must first descend into the soul, and enter into her life and action, and set her face to face with God, and give her a motion towards God, before she can be rightly and duly disposed for union with His divine goodness. Nature, again, cannot have the sense of that of which she does not possess some element. God Himself must first condescend to His creature, and give her a certain supernatural element, a certain force and strength, whereby she will not only receive a sense of God, but a power also to rise above herself and move towards Him. Divine light and power must give us a foundation for the sight and sense of divine things. "He hath given us a sense," says St. John, "that we may know the true God, and be in His Son."

But the divine order established in human habits is not the same as the natural order; here we must take St. Bonaventure for our guide. As we are the natural image of God, understanding is generated from the mind or memory, and from memory and understanding love proceeds. But in our reparation the divine order is established in us after a different manner. The light of faith planted in our mind does not generate complete understanding, but only obscure knowledge. We see darkly as through a glass. Yet light and grace generate a complete goodwill in us, so that we embrace by love incomparably greater things than we see with our understanding. But love itself is a great quickener of the understanding, which, when it is prompted by a great love, sees much further into divine things than when only acting by its own power. Still love always embraces incomparably more than the understanding can reach. The Scripture therefore says, that "the eyes of God are upon them that love Him;" and that the Eternal Wisdom enriches them that love Him, and fills their treasuries. Hence the divine precept to the man of faith: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with all thy strength, and with all thy mind." We love God with our

whole mind when with a good will we adhere to Him in faith; we love God with our whole soul when with a good will we hope all things from Him; we love God with our whole heart when with a good will we love Him above all things and in all things. By the force of this threefold love of God, this living likeness is generated in us, it penetrates the essence of the soul, and radiates through the man in the sweet and gentle flame of charity.*

Thus, whilst man is created to the image of God he is constituted in the divine likeness by the grace of the Holy Spirit. But in falling from obedience he fell from subjection, and in losing his dependence on the divine gifts, he lost the gifts themselves. Then the divine likeness faded from him, and even the natural image of God was wounded by his fall, obscured in its lineaments, and weakened in its rational and moral strength. He ceased to be that integral man who is completed in design through his initial union with God, until through a wonderful dispensation of divine mercy and justice God restored him to dependence on His goodness.

Of these two states of man, our English St. Aelred of Rivaux gives a luminous description in the following terms: "The rational creature is alone capable of beatitude; made to his Creator's image, he was formed for adhering to God whose image he is; this is the one good of the rational creature, for as David sings: 'My good is to adhere to God.' It is not the body but the soul that adheres to God, who has planted three powers in her, through which she may be the recipient of eternity, the partaker of wisdom, and the enjoyer of sweetness. These powers are memory, understanding, and will or love. The man created in these three powers to the image of the Trinity, had his memory retentive of God without forgetfulness; his understanding given to know God without error, and his love embracing God without cupidity for other things. And so he was blessed. But after he had thirsted for a likeness of God that was in direct contradiction to God, and had resolved through curiosity to obtain this closer resemblance, it most justly fell out that he came down into unlikeness. Thus was God's image corrupted in man, although not utterly destroyed: he still has memory, but it is prone to forgetfulness; he still has understanding, but it is subject to error; he still has love, but it is given to concupiscence."†

* S. Bonavent. 2 *Sentent.* d. 16, q. 1, *et alibi.*

† S. Aelred, *Speculum Charitatis*, in Bib. Max. Patrum.

An image however deformed has still the character of an image, and a tendency to imitate its original, if not rightly, then wrongly, offensively, and as it were in caricature. In a dark, preposterous, and sinful way, he takes himself for his object in place of God, and under a veil of seeming good he mocks the supreme order of things. The vices take in him the place of the virtues, veiling their unlawful objects under the appearance of better things. Pride affects divinity; curiosity affects the love of truth; cupidity wears the semblance of charity; avarice pretends the pursuit of good; ambition affects eternity; and indolence beatitude. We are so essentially made to imitate God, that our very sins, the fruits of our perverted powers, affect to imitate the just action of those powers when they tend to God as the truth, goodness, and beatitude of our souls. It is the perverted use of our powers in the face of God's light and law that reveals in a special manner the deformity of our sins, and the dark depths of their guilt.

Although you have already heard St. Aelred contrasting the just and beautiful order of the man of grace with the disorder and deformity of the fallen man, you will not regret listening to a yet more luminous extract from his great contemporary St. Bernard. He says: "That Blessed and Eternal Trinity, the one God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, the Supreme Power, Wisdom and Benignity, created to His own image and likeness a certain trinity in the rational soul, which bears a resemblance to the Supreme Trinity. This resemblance consists in the memory, understanding, and will. God created the soul in this form to abide in Him and partake from Him, that man might be happy. But this created trinity chose nevertheless to fall away in the free exercise of its will, rather than to adhere to God in the free acceptance of the grace of its Creator. Through suggestion, delight, and consent, man fell from his high and beautiful trinity of power, wisdom, and purity into a degraded and contradictory trinity of infirmity, blindness, and uncleanness. For the memory became weak and powerless, the understanding dark and imprudent, and the will unclean. . . . Yet that Most Blessed Trinity, remembering His mercy and forgetting our guilt, did nevertheless repair the grievous, darksome, and unclean lapse of our nature. The Son of God, sent with this view from the Father, gave us faith; and after the Son, the Holy Spirit was sent, and He gave us charity; and

through faith and charity hope arose of returning to the Father. Through this trinity of faith, hope and charity, that Blessed and unchangeable Trinity brought back our inconstant, fallen, and miserable trinity, as with a trident, from the deep void to our lost happiness. Faith illuminates our reason, hope lifts up our understanding, and charity purifies us."*

The divine power that operates in the soul, and exalts her native powers with the supernatural virtues, we call grace, because it is the free and unpurchasable gift of God, to which nature can assert no right or claim. It comes of God's pure condescension and benevolence. The Prophets, Christ our Lord, the Fathers, the Church in her prayers as well as her teaching, all instruct us that this divine gift of grace comes of the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit within the soul. In creating the soul of Adam, God breathed from His Holy Spirit into the face of the man, and he arose a living soul, having the life of grace from God, through the communication of His Holy Spirit. For our reparation Christ breathed into the face of His Apostles and said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." By this solemn act the Son of God recalled the breathing of the grace of the Holy Spirit into Adam, and gave power to the Apostles to cleanse human souls from sin, and to restore them to the grace of the Holy Spirit. By the same expressive mode of action, God as our Creator gave His Spirit to sanctify the first man, and as our Redeemer gave His Spirit to repair the ruin of the fallen man, and to sanctify him anew. St. Cyril of Alexandria says: "As we are formed to the likeness of our Creator through partaking of His Holy Spirit, it is manifest that no one can obtain God's likeness without partaking of His Holy Spirit. When our Redeemer would restore God's likeness to man, he also breathed on His disciples, and said: 'Receive ye the Holy Ghost.' What this partaking of the Holy Spirit gives to man, is the perfect expression of the image of the divine substance."†

In describing from what man falls when he loses the state of grace, St. Paul has given us a perfect description of this divine grace, and of its operations and effects in the soul. "Who," he says, "were once illuminated, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, have tasted the

* S. Bernard, *Serm.* 45, *De Varia Trinitate Dei et hominis.*

† S. Cyril Alexand. *Thesaurus*, apud Petav.

good word of God, and the power of the world to come." A saint has said with beautiful truth, that if reason is the eye of the soul, faith is the pupil of the eye. And we may add that if the spiritual sense is the heart of the soul, the grace of divine love is the life of the heart. Faith illuminates, love tastes the heavenly gift, and the power of the world to come. How by present grace we taste the power of the world to come, St. Peter has explained in equally exalted language. He says: "All things of divine power which appertain to life and godliness, are given to us through the knowledge of Him who has called us by His own proper glory and virtue. By whom He hath given us most great and precious promises; that by these you may be made partakers of the divine nature; flying the corruption of that concupiscence which is in the world."

The gift of charity makes the soul of the just man godlike. The principle of that charity is the divine action of the Holy Spirit in the soul, and hence the Fathers, following St. Peter, call it a certain partaking of the divine nature, not of the substance but of the operation of the Holy Spirit. St. Thomas teaches that the grace which makes man pleasing to God, not only exalts him with supernatural virtue to a higher mode of existence, but that it is the root and principle of the infused virtues. He argues that, as the natural light of our reason is something beyond our acquired virtues, which virtues are the ordering of our nature according to the light of reason, so that light of grace which is a partaking of the divine nature, is something beyond the infused virtues, which derive themselves from that light, and are regulated with respect to that light, as the Apostle says: "Ye were once darkness, but now light in the Lord." From which the Prince of theologians concludes, that as by grace we are regenerated to become the sons of God, the grace which is the principle of this regeneration is implanted in the substance of the soul, like a life within a life, or a soul within a soul. For as man participates of divine knowledge in his mind through the virtue of faith, and of divine love in his will through the virtue of charity, so, after a certain similitude, through regeneration or a new creation, he participates of the divine nature within the nature of the soul. And as the powers of the soul, which are the principles of her acts, flow from her essence, so from the grace of regeneration, received into the essence of the soul, flow the graces of the virtues

into her powers, exalting those powers to perform their supernatural acts.*

This exposition of the Angelic Doctor deserves our deep meditation. It is an admirable exposition of the way in which the grace of justification, that is of divine charity, is fitted to the nature of our soul, to her unity of essence and trinity of powers. It shows in a special manner, that as the unity of the soul's essence is the principle of the unity of her powers, so the unity of the divine grace of justification is the principle of the unity of the supernatural virtues that are exercised in those powers. It also enables us to enter into the profundity of St. Paul, when he calls charity the bond of perfection. Long before St. Thomas, the great St. Leo had said, that "the plentitude of justice, and the sum of the virtues, spring from that love whereby we love God."†

What is life without love? Apathy is deadness, enmity is a killing bitterness, love is the wealth of the soul, making her rich with life and glowing with good in proportion to the goodness of that life to which she devotes her own. What we see instructs us, but what we love works a change in us. Our love is both an active and an attractive force; it draws to us the qualities of the object that we love, those qualities change our qualities, and make us like the object that we love. The life we love enters into our life, and changes our spirit and character into something of the goodness, greatness, and dignity of the object to which we give our love. With love our soul expands, and is enlarged with the greater life that attracts our affections, and is purified with its purity, and the soul goes forth out of herself to live in the object of her love. God is love, and to love God is life.

Pride is not love, it is pure selfishness, and selfishness is destructive of love: pride is the very reverse of love, it is the most spurious and ungenerous of all affections. Pride is not only the most selfish, but it is the most unreasonable and most odious of affections, the effect of which is to contract, and blind, and harden the soul, which makes her equally unreceptive both of truth and of good. But love is both generous and ingenuous, opening the soul to bring forth whatever is most dear or secret within her, and bringing it into the sunshine of the divine life of God, which makes that soul dear to Him.

Concupiscence is not love, it is but a vile and degrading

* S. Thom. *Sum.* 1, 2, q. 110–111. † S. Leo, *Serm. De S. Laurent.*

passion that gives sway to the body over the soul. Concupiscence defiles and debases the soul, disorders her powers and weakens them. But that true love for which man was created, and which is alone worthy of him, is charity, which begins in God, and tends to God, and embraces, purifies, and perfects every love of the creature. It gives a divine motive, and power, and a certain sweetness of its own even to the natural affections, and has its final end in God.

God is charity; charity is His nature, His life, and the unceasing action of His goodness. His charity moving through His Holy Spirit moves in all the charity that circulates in the soul from her first movement towards divine things. It is a most sacred and unspeakable operation, whereby a divine state is established in us. Hence St. Paul calls charity "the more excellent way," and "the bond of perfection," and "the fulfilment of the commandments." Man is perfected therefore by the love of God: this love puts his relations with God in their just, due, and happy order, and regulates his love and duty towards every person and thing that is less than God.

We are now in a position to take the measure of manhood by the one true standard with which man is measured by his Creator. The man of nature is the man begun; he is still in the rudiments of manhood. The man of grace is the man brought into living relations with the supreme object of his existence, his soul is in communion with the good that perfects his nature. He is regenerated to that life for which he was created, and having in him the rudiments of spiritual life, as a living subject he begins to advance towards God as his living object. The man of faith and charity continues to perfect his manhood with greater light and charity, raising his life to higher life, and approaching nearer to the greater good; and when the hour comes in which God calls him, he leaves his mortal frame behind him, and purified from the dross of his mortal life, he enters into the vision of God; where the flame of his charity is attracted by the divine flame of God's eternal charity, and the man is completed and consummated in perfection according to God's eternal plan. Yet he is not absolutely perfected to the full measure until his body is raised from the dust, and regenerated, spiritualised, and immortalised, and made the responsive instrument of his glorified soul.

This is the true progress of man, and God is the object of his progress. The men of this world, who are truly so called when they rarely look beyond it, never tire to speak of human progress. Yet strange to say, they invariably omit the object, aim, or end of that progress; progress with them is the accumulation of natural knowledge, human inventions, the fruits of industry, and the resources of earthly pleasure, all that in a word which the man leaves when he quits the body. Even the pagan philosophers were wiser in principle when, conscious of their immortality, they sought the supreme good of the soul. The path marked out by God for man's advancement, is from his first rudimental and natural existence to the final filling up and perfecting of his nature in the highest life and divinest good. This is not merely a personal but a social advancement, begun in the great society of God's Church here below, where the Son of God reigns, and the Holy Spirit operates, and the whole society mutually help each other onwards; and from the Church on earth the advancement is to the society of God in heaven, and the company of the angels, and of the spirits of the just made perfect. Progress in any other direction than the way of the just, whatever shows it may give to the imagination, with whatever flatteries it may soothe the pride of life, whatever concupiscences it may excite in the inferior man, with whatever diversions it may amuse his vanity, is progress downwards. It is a descent, and a shameful descent, from the appointed order of human progress, and a failure from the divine standard of manhood. This divine philosophy pervades the Scriptures, and finds its confirmation in the constitution of the soul, in the light of the mind, and in the deepest aspirations of our inward nature. But nowhere has this divine philosophy of human progress been more strongly inculcated than by St. Paul, who exhorts us to advance from image to image and from likeness to likeness, as from the Spirit of the Lord, that we may reach to the stature of the perfect man.

The Scriptures draw a perpetual distinction between two kinds of men, between the just and spiritual man and the carnal or animal man. The one is raised to that height of manhood which God designed for him, the other has descended to greater or less proximity of life with the animals beneath him, to the grievous deforming of his nature. For whilst the animals are

in the due order of their nature, the man has left the due order of his nature, whether he subjects his soul against his reason to his animal propensities, or whether by the abuse of his light he corrupts his imagination to his ignominy.

Let us sum up the attributes proper to man, which, when the will keeps them in their due order and exercise, give him the becoming elevation of manhood. The first is the unspeakable superiority of his soul over his body, a superiority founded in the very nature of things, so that the subjection of the body to the soul is the first principle of human order. The second is man's attribute of reason, which requires him to be in all things reasonable, to obey the truth, and to observe the law of reason. The third is his conscience and sense of God, which commands him to be obedient to the internal voice of God. But the fourth is his noblest distinction, and that is the constitution of his soul in the image of God, which reflects the Holy Trinity in his spiritual nature, and gives him the capacity for God, and for the reception of divine and eternal things. This living image of God requires him to seek first the things that are above, and not the things beneath him, that he may do justice to his nature, and justice to God; and that by seeking and obtaining the gifts of God he may be transformed from a less perfect to a more perfect image of God by obtaining the divine likeness. He thus ascends from animal to reasonable life, and from reasonable to spiritual life, by working with God to perfect his nature.

It is upon this standard of humanity, as held out by God, that the Fathers take the measure of man. St. Augustine says: "When a man adheres to God he is something; but when he departs from God he is nothing." * That is to say, man without God is a subject without its object; his chief capacity, that for eternal good, is empty and void; without the end of his existence he is a failure. St. Hilary writes in these searching terms: "What is so difficult to find, or so great when found, as a man who keeps in mind that he is made to the image and likeness of God. The man who attends to the divine word, who knows the reason of his soul and body, and contemplates their origin and motive, understands for what end they exist and were created. But the man who neglects this knowledge, loses his right to the name of man, and is unworthy the name of man. For this reason, when the

* S. August. *Super Psalm*, lxxv.

Prophets and Apostles have to speak vehement reproach, they drop the name of man, who loses his chief properties with his innocence, and change it to some other, such as horse, mule, fox, serpent or viper."*

St. John Chrysostom applies the divine standard of manhood to man in a number of places. Commenting, for example, on the character of Job, he says: "The profane who do not belong to us are wont to define man. What is man? Consult the definitions of philosophers, and they will say that man is a rational and mortal animal. But the Scriptures agree not with their definitions. What is man? He is just, irreproachable, truthful, departing from evil works, so that what is not approved by the witness of good works is not man. Such a one bears the stamp and form of man's nature, but he is deformed by malicious intentions. Hear it from the prophet: 'Man when he was in honour, did not understand; he is compared to foolish beasts, and is made like to them.'"† In another homily the Golden-mouthed Doctor says: To have a man's body and voice is not to be a man; to be a man is to have the soul of a man and the affections proper to a soul. There is no sign more sure of a man having a soul than when he loves to hear God's truth, as there is no greater proof of an irrational animal soul than to despise God's truth.

The prophet Isaias says of a populous city: "There is not in it a man." Losing the courage of obedience at a trying moment, they lost their reasonableness, and their manhood could not be reckoned upon. The tendency of Inspired Truth is to contemplate the carnal man as actually sharing the blind passions and degrading habits of the beasts to which they are likened. For, as St. Gregory of Nyssa remarks: "The man who comes down from his manhood into an irrational and animal life, partakes of the habits of some animal or other in whatever passion or vice he may suffer to torment his soul, be it the deaf adder, the crafty serpent, the proud peacock, or the dog returning to his vomit." The Scriptures call destructive men wild boars; the sly and cunning are called foxes; despoilers are rapacious eagles; false teachers are likened to ravening wolves; and there is a yet more terrible comparison of lascivious men with another example of the animal creation. In short the man whom the Scriptures regard as less than man, is he

* S. Hilarius, Tract. in Psalm, cxviii.

† S. J. Chrysost. *Hom.* ii, *in Job.*

who has descended below the dignity of his nature, and has lost sight of his final end. St. Chrysostom judges the man by the soul, and the soul by the grace and truth of which it partakes. Our Lord Himself has given a like measure of humanity, where He says: "Not in bread alone doth man live, but in every word that proceedeth from the mouth of God."

The Hebrew Scriptures have an emphatic way of expressing the complete man, the man endowed with light and power from above, they call him "a man and a man." Philo the Jew says, in his Book on the Giants, that "this double man has no reference to the composition of body and soul, but it signifies the man endowed with the virtues." This twofold man is the supernatural added to the natural man. This is what the Fathers understand by it, as well as some of the Rabbinical writers. In the Book of Numbers there occurs this text, "the man and the man whosoever shall vow his vow to the Lord." Upon which Origen thus comments: "Why is the name of man repeated, as if it were not sufficient to say the man who vows? The Apostle teaches that there is an exterior man and an interior man, and that the interior man is renewed day by day in the image of God who created him, whilst the exterior man is subject to corruption. When we come to the perfect man, we come to the man who accepts God's laws, and offers his vows to the Lord. But no man can offer these vows unless he have something within him, something even within his substance that he can offer to God. The exterior man will not suffice to receive God's law, nor can he offer his vows to God, because he has nothing worthy of God; but the interior man has that within him that he may offer to God. In him the virtues dwell, in him there is knowledge and understanding, and the renewal of the divine image. When he has regained the fair grace that he had in the beginning, and has recovered the former beauty of the virtues, then he can once more offer vows to God, and may not only be called a man, but a man and a man. But he who does not cultivate the interior man, who hath no care of that man, who builds not himself in the virtues, who does not take to discipline, who is not exercised in the Scriptures, such a one cannot be called a man and a man, but only a man and an animal."*

St. Macarius of Egypt explains this twofold man in beautiful

* Origen, *Hom.* xxv. *in Numeros.*

terms: "If any man love God," he says, "God infuses His love within him; and when once he puts a generous confidence in God, God superadds the heavenly faith, and from this addition he becomes a twofold man. Into whatever you offer in any of your members to God, God mingles something of His own, that you may do everything with purity, both in loving Him and in praying to Him. This makes man of great value."* Omitting the reasoning of St. Basil, which St. Ambrose likewise follows, we will give his conclusion. "We have," he says, "the hidden man enclosed within us, and after a certain manner we are understood to be a twofold man; for the common saying that the man is within us, is true. This doubling of the name of man to express the perfection of manhood, of the man who is both the image and likeness of God, is pre-eminently applicable to the humanity of our Lord Jesus Christ, the one type and form of the perfect man, concerning whom the Psalmist asks: "Shall Sion say: a man and a man is born in her?"

These two men, the new, interior, and regenerated man, and the old exterior man reformed by the new, are perfectly distinguished and described by St. Paul. "That was not first," he says, "which is spiritual, but that which is natural: afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man was of the earth, earthly: the second man from heaven, heavenly. Such as is the earthly, such also are the earthly: and such as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot possess the kingdom of God, neither shall corruption possess incorruption." Again he says: "Put off, according to the former conversation, the old man who is corrupted according to the desires of error, and put on the new man, who according to God, is created in justice and holiness of truth." The old man is not therefore destroyed according to nature, but reformed according to God; and receiving the new man Christ into the old man Adam, he becomes a man and a man.

You have now had placed before you the true type of manhood, not as the world estimates man, not as profane philosophy takes the measure of his dignity, but as his Creator has planned his nature in the view of his final end, and has provided for him the means to accomplish that final end. He gives him first a rudimental existence, complete nevertheless in itself, and distinct

* S. Macarius, *Hom.* xv.

from every other; then He gives him a development through the gifts of His Providence; then an advancement dependent on His own will by the gifts of grace towards eternal things. Finally, he is delivered from this world of probation, and if he has been faithful, he enters into union with God as the Supreme and Eternal Object of his inmost desires. Solomon has not hesitated to express this union of the soul with God in perfect love, under the allegory of a happy human marriage. Christ our Lord has also described the entrance into the Kingdom of God under the parable of a marriage feast. And to St. John the final union of souls with God was portrayed under the figure of the marriage feast of the Lamb.

It is the modern fashion of innumerable writers, and the passion of still more innumerable readers, to contemplate human life in every mythical form, as being absorbed in the earlier days of manhood in a struggle through difficulties, the object of which is a happy union in which the purpose of life is gained, and its trials brought to an end. How far these fictions most commonly are from the realities of life, and to what extent they falsify the minds that widely indulge in them, and take them for the ways of wisdom, is best known to those who have studied human life the most. But this may be said with most certain truth, that the happiest union of mortal with mortal, where each supplements what the other requires, is a very faint, remote, and imperfect figure of that union of the soul with God, in which the image of God comes to its Divine Original, and every want ceases, and every desire is accomplished.

And now by way of conclusion, let us look at the law of human progress through the eyes of St. Hilary. Earthly and imperfect causes, he observes, have this character, that they are changeable. Grief troubles joy, anger disturbs peace, offence interrupts good will, envy disturbs equanimity, and anxiety our sense of security. When some appetite creeps into our weak and inconstant affections, we are no longer what we were. A sudden change comes over us, and turns us from what we were into what we have so suddenly become. But the blessed God is perfect. He needs no progress because there is nothing wanting to Him. He has no beginning; He knows no change; He *is;* and what He is comes from no other source than Himself. He is; and is in Himself, and with Himself and to Himself, and is Himself unto Himself,

and all things are unto Him. Nothing can be added to Him, because He Himself is all, and all things are unto Him.

From this best and most benevolent beatitude, through His Word, our Lord Jesus Christ, all creations of invisible and heavenly creatures are made, and also the constitution of spiritual with corporal creations. He gains nothing to Himself from these creatures; no one hath need of what He gives away from Himself, or profits by what He imparts to another. But the things that profit us come from an external source; what heals our wants is not what we have, but what we have hitherto been strangers to. The God from whom all things are, has no need, therefore, of a single thing that He creates, but He has created them all for them who are born into life. As it would be long to treat of celestial creatures, let us speak of ourselves.

God constituted man, not because He required his service, but because He is good, and made man to partake of His beatitude. He perfects this rational creature in life and sense to share His eternity. This is absolutely clear from His own words: "And now, O Israel, what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but that thou fear the Lord thy God, and walk in His ways, and love Him, and serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and all thy soul; and keep His commandments, and His justifications, which I command this day, that it may be well with thee." God asks no service of us but faith, innocence, and religion. He demands our love and service, that through them we may be judged worthy to be rewarded with His goodness and beatitude. But the communication of His goodness, like the sun's splendour, the fire's warmth, or the flower's sweetness, profits not Him who gives, but him who receives. As He is not jealous of that good which with Him is eternal, He takes us up to the sense and enjoyment of that good.

Yet the good and perfect God gives not that good to us without reason and measure. What He gives first to each one is his sense and freedom of life, not imposing any necessity, that each one's good and evil may be decided by law. Having created us from benevolence to obtain beatitude, He has ordained our progress to that beatitude through a just and innocent life. Were He to withhold us from evil by putting a constraining necessity upon us, what honour, what goodness could such a necessity deserve? Goodness is therefore offered to our free will and choice, and as the reward of free will, not as the result of a necessity uninspired by

law. Yet whilst our God invites and attracts us to good and to upright living that we may hope to enjoy His goodness, He adds pain and suffering to the deserting and despising of that goodness, that as necessity could do nothing for us, the terror of pain and suffering may act as a reasonable control of our liberty. Liberty is given us in view of reason and in view of just reward, whilst the unruliness of liberty is kept in order by the ordinance of fear; that whilst the hope of reward encourages us to will what is good, the fear of vindictive punishment may dissuade us from willing evil.*

Wherefore, to omit many things that might be said, after considering why man was made in the image of God, we point the sum of this lecture in the words of St. Augustine: "Any one may call himself a man, or think himself a man, but he who neither obeys God nor fears Him is unworthy the title of man." Or as the Christian philosopher Boetius puts it more comprehensively: "It comes to this; you cannot account him to be a man who is deformed with the vices; for where goodness is abandoned the man ceases to be; unable to ascend to a divine condition, he descends into the state of the irrational creation."† This also is the conclusion of Solomon: "Fear God, and keep His commandments, for this is the whole man."

* S. Hilarius, *Ennaratio in Psalm.* 2.

† Boetius, *De Consolatione Philos.* Lib. IV. *prosa* iv.

LECTURE III.

THE SECONDARY IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN.

"And let him have dominion over . . . . the whole earth."—GENESIS i. 26.

IF the Hebrew tongue was blessed with a name for God which expressed His absolute Being, our own is happy in a name that expresses His nature. For God and good are the same word with a different spelling. God is *the* good, the one good, the absolute good, the fontal good, from whom is all good that is or can exist. When a certain person addressed our Lord as "good master," not knowing His Divinity, Christ said to him: "Why asketh thou me concerning good? one is good, God." If then we would use the sacred name of God with reverent intelligence, we must fill it with its divine sense, that it may have the habitual power of awakening our mind and heart to the One Divine and All-perfect Good.

It is of the nature of an intelligent being to do all things for a reasonable end; and the nature of a good intelligence to do all things for a good and wise end. But the God of infinite perfection must always contemplate in His actions the most perfect end, and that most perfect end is Himself. He acts not for a greater end in the greatest things, and for a lesser end in the lesser things; but He designs, creates, upholds, provides, and rules all things to His own eternal glory. Whatever may be the subjective or the relative value of His various works, taken in themselves, His act in them is perfect, because of the perfect end to which they are ordained. Yet God is not as man that He should covet glory: He is Himself the perfect glory, to which nothing can be added, and from which nothing can be taken. From His Divine Dignity and perfect Majesty comes the just and essential order of things, and this order requires that the author of all things should have the glory of all

things. As God is the first cause of all things and the exemplary cause of all things, He is also the Final Cause of all things. The divine intention is the motive of creation, this intention is the end contemplated, and the end contemplated is God Himself. He is the beginning and the end of all, and therefore whatever He creates that moves in its just order, moves as it were in a circle, having its beginning from God through His creative Word in time, and moving through the course of time towards the same God as its final end.

God is the reason of all created things, and this reason is threefold. As the first principle of all, God the Father is the First Cause of all. In His Word or Reason are the intelligible forms of all things, and therefore God the Word is the Exemplary Cause of all things. As He is the Final Cause of all things, God the Holy Spirit, the perfecter, operates in bringing His faithful works to the honour and glory of the Holy Trinity as to their Final Cause. As the reason of all things, God imparts the light of reason to His intelligent creatures, that in Him they may find the reason of their reason, the final object and end of all their searches after truth and goodness. This is expressed in the inspired proverb of Solomon: "God hath made all things for Himself;" but to provide an order for them who with perverse wills turn their reason away from the divine reason, this clause is added to the inspired word: "The wicked also for the evil day."

It is because God is the final cause of all things, and all are made for His glory, that He also contemplates an intermediate end of His creation; and this end is to impart to His creatures according to their nature, some reflection of His Being, some vestige or resemblance of His goodness. Material things reflect His Being in their existence, intelligent creatures reflect His intelligence in their reason, and just spirits reflect His life, beauty, and goodness in their love.

If we contemplate the created universe as a whole, the whole is made for God. If we consider it part by part, each part of the great whole has also its special and immediate end; for whatever is inferior in the nature of things is ordained to minister to what is superior. As the superior part of this world and as the subject of Heaven, man is immediately subject to God, and what is inferior to man is ordained to the immediate service of man.

Yet whilst the inferior creation has its immediate end in the

nobler creation of rational souls, whose direct end is God Himself, this does not prevent the inferior creatures from representing the being and goodness of God in what they are ; or from having their final end in God. For although the material creature is made for the spiritual creature, it is not the less made for the Divine Goodness. For whilst the whole universe of created things forms one grand construction, reflecting in its countless dependencies and harmonies the manifold wisdom and glory of God ; each part of this wonderful construction is made with reference to the whole ; and whilst each inferior part is subject to what is superior, which gives an inexhaustible lesson to rational man, the whole creation is one complete organization, whose immediate end is the manifestation of God, and whose final end is the glory of God.*

God alone has the supreme power and sovereign dominion over all His creatures. He is the fontal source of all power, authority, right and rule. Human rights have their authority in divine rights, and human dominion obtains its authority from the divine dominion. The just laws that regulate and secure the rights of man, spring immediately from human reason and the divinely constituted order of things, and these have their foundation in the divine reason. But man's dominion over the earth and what the earth contains, is so familiar to him, that he rarely reflects on the origin of the authority with which he is invested to wield that dominion. That God designed man to exercise this dominion, is visibly written in the volume of creation, in which we see the aptitude of the sensible world to be subject to the service of the spiritual creation, and the capacity of the spiritual creature to subject the inferior works of God to his dominion and use.

But the right to exercise this dominion was a formal grant from God to man, expressed by a sovereign decree of His supreme authority. This grant is coeval with the creation of man, was renewed after its forfeiture at the deluge, and is contained in the most ancient of legal documents. "And God said : Let us make man to our own image and likeness ; and let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creature that moveth on the earth." And "God blessed them, saying : Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it."

* See S. Thomas, *Sum.* p. 1, q. 44, a. 4, q. 65, a. 2.

The dominion of the earth with all it contains was given to man with the divine blessing. What is this blessing? It is the fruitful influence which God sheds upon His creatures from His goodness, giving them vigour, growth, and the power to multiply. It is the fertilising gift which augments the gifts of existence and of vitality.

The key to the understanding of this world is the divine purpose contemplated by its Author; it was designed for the training of immortal souls for an eternal life with God. It is therefore endowed with a great diversity of offices and aptitudes for this purpose. Framed for the abode of man from the dawning of his existence to the end of his probation, it is wonderfully fitted and tempered to the requirements of his body, as his body is yet more wonderfully fitted to his soul. It is provisioned with all things good and suitable for his use, instruction, and pleasure. After each order of creation had risen up into existence at the omnipotent command, "God saw that it was good." After the whole visible creation was evolved from chaos and completed, "God saw all things which He had made, and they were exceedingly good." The whole creation, viewed in its manifold relations, harmonies, uses, and dependencies, was a good exceedingly greater in its unity than were the several creations viewed separately. They were exceedingly good for the end for which they were made.

But when God made man, He did not say that man was good, because God Himself is the good of man. The good of man is exterior to this world, and he can only reach that good by his own choice, and by the free exercise of his will. But the inferior creation was made good for the service and instruction of man.

By one and the same decree of His sovereign will, God both created man and gave to him and his descendants dominion over the earth, to subdue it, and dominion over all the creatures it contains, that they might do him service. The earth has no intelligence to know its existence; its mineral treasures know not their own wealth; its vegetable glories have no consciousness; the animal world has no light of reason whereby to know its Creator. The visible world knows not from what it exists, or for what end it exists, or that it does exist. This knowledge God has implanted in man for the whole creation that exists around

him. He is a will to the creatures of the earth, and, as it were, a god to them. "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world and all that dwell therein." And the Lord of the universe has made man to be His viceroy over every other creature that the world contains. He is a mystery to them, as God is a mystery to him. Nevertheless, he rules them within certain limits; he commands them and they obey his will.

If a reason is asked for this grand dispensation, the profoundest reason, as of all divine dispensations, is hidden with God in His eternity. But even our human reason has light enough to see that it is far more magnificent and glorious to God that He should create intelligent beings with a capacity to exercise dominion, and a power to rule the inferior creation, than if He had reserved all power and dominion in this world to Himself. To this we must add, that the responsibility imposed on man, as the delegate of God's authority, constitutes a large element in his moral training for the Kingdom of Heaven, where justice and mercy reign supreme.

The parable of the master who called his servants and gave them his goods, a portion to each, according to his ability, that all might fructify them until he came to take the reckoning, may be taken to illustrate the end for which God has imparted a share to man of His dominion over the creation. And the sentence pronounced upon their just or neglectful stewardship reveals the moral end of the plan upon which this human administration of God's creation is founded. "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; because thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

This delegated right of dominion over God's creations is not a mere prerogative of human dignity, it is also a trust, to be exercised in dependence on God, and with accountability to Him, not only as a great element of moral training, but as a source of moral worth, which is the true wealth of the soul. Yet over all things God holds the dominion in chief, and to every created thing He gives its force, its qualities, its limits, the order in which it acts, or is acted upon, and His own overruling providence. But to men He likewise gives His law, in which the rightful use and ruling of His creatures is prescribed to them.

The action of God is clearly visible in the ordering of the

world; and where the light of reason is not utterly perverted, all men at times feel His power in the creation. What but the continuance of God's creative will upholds the world in existence? What but His regulating providence makes the elements of the world keep their place, their proportions, and their equable balance, so admirably tempered to human needs? What but His will and wisdom have ordained all things in number, weight, and measure? What makes the earth and the orbs of Heaven to move in their appointed courses? What makes the sun to glow with a splendour softened to the requirements of human eyes and human life? What causes the moon and the glittering stars to illuminate our night? What causes the winds to breathe in gentle gales, or to blow with purging vehemence? What makes the ever-changing clouds, those curtains from the solar heat and revivers of the earth, to muster in their squadrons, and career before the winds; the showers to fall; the streams to flow; the seas to agitate their purifying waves; the earth to germinate in flowers and fruits; the air to feed the flame of mortal life; the waters to fertilize; all nature to bring forth? To give names to hidden causes is to confess their existence, but not to discover what they are. Science may trace the dependencies of things upon each other, at least, on the visible side of them that is exposed to human sight, and may follow the links of the lower end of the chain of causation. But what, and where, is the primal force from which all causation springs? What primal force moves all material things that are in their nature passive? What keeps them orderly, temperate, and measured in their movements, whether worlds, or elements, or things that vegetate, or that move with the force and harmony of animal life? We may ask what, and what, in vain, so long as we search for their causes in material nature. The Divine Author of all is the first mover of all, whilst He is Himself immovable; and the creation receives its energies and modes of movement from the most tranquil, yet ever-acting, will of God, "who maketh His sun to shine over the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust."

There is no method of thought more disloyal to truth, no style of speech more uncongenial with the religious sense, none more deceptive in its results, than that low method of thought and expression so common in the world, that makes material nature the seat of those laws which have their presence in the mind of

God, and their force in His Will. How can things without intelligence or will be in any reasonable sense the subjects of law? Law is a moral rule existing in some mind. Material things are passive in the hands of God, as they are passive in the hands of man. It is their nature to be passive, and to move as they are moved. All motion has its origin in the will of some spiritual being; no other explanation of its existence is possible. God is the prime mover of all things. The law of that movement is in God; the order and measure of that movement is in the unconscious creature. The correct mode of speaking, where material things are in question, is to speak of the order rather than of the laws of nature, because the laws of nature are in the wisdom of God, whilst the orderings of nature are the signets of His will and wisdom impressed on His creation.

When we look no higher than nature for the laws that give order, regularity, measure, and mutual dependence to its elements, we ascribe to that insensible nature what belongs to God, and so forget that in His works we behold the signs of His power and wisdom. Nothing can be more unphilosophical than the constant use of language in which material effects are put for their living cause, or in which material order and sequence are confounded with law. When we ascribe laws to material nature; when we say that nature does this, or nature does that, we transfer the exalted honour of law, the attribute of intelligence, from God to unconscious matter; this way of speaking generates a like way of thinking, and of looking to the creature for what belongs to the Creator.

There is a law of nature, but that law is implanted in human reason, and regulates the conduct of man. "Nature acts in order," observes St. Gregory of Nyssa, "but the force of that order depends upon that first command of God, which, once given, goes on through all that is procreated to the end."* If under its natural conditions the order of nature is uniform, that is ordained for its conservation, and also for the benefit of man, that from the ordinary course of nature he may know on what he may rely. But as the force that moves nature is the act of God's will, directing all things to their appointed ends; as nature is made for man, not man for nature; as the ends of nature are subservient to the moral and the supernatural end of man; and as the whole ordering of nature

* S. Greg. Nyssa, *in Verb. Faciamus hom. Orat.* i.

depends on the sovereign will of God; it is most reasonable to expect that from time to time God should express His free power over nature, and exhibit His condescension to man by subordinating the natural to the supernatural order of things, whether to confirm His revelations, or to answer the prayers of His servants. The natural was created for the supernatural, and strange would it be if this subordination were never brought to visible proof.

God who made all things ultimately for Himself, made them intermediately and in a special manner for the just who obey His voice. For though they also serve the unjust, that is but imperfectly, and for a time that passes quickly. This world may be considered as a school whose immediate object is to train the just for eternal life. "From His gratuitous goodness," says St. Bernard, "God made all things for Himself; He made all things to serve His elect. This goodness is their effective cause; but the service of the elect is their terminal cause."* In disposing the elements of creation therefore in a natural and uniform order, God reserved the sovereign right of acting upon a higher law to higher ends; and He is not at all seasons inexorable to the humble prayer of faithful souls, as His own revelations, the frequent acts of history, and the common belief of mankind bear witness.

God made the world as much for the instruction as for the use of man during the course of his probation. And as the just man is trained by faith for the vision of God, who would have us love Him as He deserves before we see Him as He is, the visible world is the veil drawn between the human spirit and the eternal mysteries. Still it is a luminous veil, partly concealing and partly revealing the wondrous ways of God. When with spiritual eyes we look upon the marvellous diversities of things spread out beneath the canopy of heaven, and with a reverential spirit explore the mysteries hidden in the world, we everywhere see the shadows of the Divine Attributes, and the footsteps of the Eternal Wisdom. "For the invisible things of God are clearly seen from the things that are made, His eternal power also and divinity." To the eyes that are cleared by humility, the providence of God is everywhere visible in its action, and everywhere His care is manifest. "This visible universe," says St. Basil, "is like a written book that bears witness to God and preaches His glory. To the intelligent

* S. Bernard, *Serm.* iii. *De Pentecoste.*

creature it eloquently proclaims that August Majesty who might otherwise be concealed from our knowledge. The heavens show forth the glory of God; and the firmament the work of His hands."*

When a certain philosopher put the question to St. Antony "How can you live in this solitude without books?" the holy hermit replied: "My books are the nature of things that God has created. It gives me the choice of the volumes which God Himself has written." Those books are always open to us, but as they demand the light of God to read them in the sense of God, there are but few persons who read them in the ample sense of their Divine Author.

Besides the natural ends which the inferior creation fulfils, God calls this creation to accomplish a supernatural end, when he employs its elements with which to express his supernatural revelations, and also when man is called to employ them in His Divine worship and service. In the first instance all nature becomes an imagery and a language in the mouth of God, whereby to make known His eternal truth, as we see in all the Scriptures. In the second instance, the elements of nature as appointed by God, and with the consecration of sacerdotal power, are made the expressive veils and localising envelopments of the Divine Sacrifice, and of the sacraments, that bring grace to man; as in other religious uses they give a symbolic splendour to God's worship, and are the visible expression of innumerable benedictions. We cannot, therefore, rise to the full significance of that dominion which God has given to man over His creation, unless we embrace the supernatural as well as the natural ends for which that dominion is given.

Man was made in the image of God, then, not only that he might be capable of union with God, but also that he might be capable of receiving, as God's representative, a certain power and dominion over the inferior creation. And this authority to subject the irrational creatures of God to his will and dominion, constitutes that secondary image of God, which is founded on the first, in which he bears a living resemblance to the Holy Trinity. The image of God by nature, and His likeness by grace, he is also the vicegerent of the Sovereign Lord of nature by divine appointment. He is the image of the Eternal King in his authority over a portion of His dominions, over that part of creation which

* S. Basil, *Exameron, Hom.* xi.

is made inferior to him. The knowledge of these inferior creatures is in him, and not in them; their use and service is for him; and he is as a god to them. By the divine command the whole world labours to serve Him day and night without cessation; either supplying his wants and pleasures without His intervention, or ready at his call to do his will; hence St. Basil calls man "a creature of empire."

Certain of the Fathers, especially those of the literal school of Antioch, point to the intimate connection between the words of Genesis: "Let us make man to our own image and likeness," and the succeeding part of the sentence: "And let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the birds of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth." They observe that man was thus made to the image of God as He is the Lord and Ruler of the visible creation. It will be sufficient to quote St. Gregory of Nyssa, and St. John Chrysostom.

St. Gregory says: "As human craftsmen give such forms to their implements as are most fitted to their purpose, so the Divine Artificer has made of our nature a most suitable instrument to administer a kingdom. To make man capable of this, He adorned him with excellent gifts of mind, and with that form of body that we see. His mind proclaims a certain high and royal dignity in him, far exceeding what belongs to a private condition. His soul knows no master in this world; he does all things as he wills, and governs himself as he chooses with a sovereign command. To whom can this belong but to a king? Man is moreover the image of the Divine Nature, whose empire all things obey. In this image we see the princely dignity that was given him at his creation. When human artists make the images of princes, they carve their lineaments after nature, clothe them with the royal purple, and when this image is completed it is called a king. But man was by nature framed and made erect to be the image and resemblance of the King of the universe, and he receives a dignity and title from his Divine Archetype to be the lord of creatures. This image is not clothed with purple, nor is this dignity set forth with diadem and sceptre, because the Divine Exemplar whom he represents has none of these things; but instead of purple he has virtue for his clothing, instead of a diadem he wears the crown of justice, and instead of a sceptre he has immortal happiness." St. Gregory then observes that as artists take

the likenesses of men with colours, God depicts His likeness in souls with the virtues; and that it is purity, peace, exemption from evil, and a happy content that make men like to God. He then concludes: "As God sees all, hears all, and searches all things; man is also like God in that he sees and hears many things, and searches them with intelligence."*

St. John Chrysostom has treated the subject on four distinct occasions, and although, contrary to the common exposition, he regards the dominion of man as his chief resemblance to God, this does not lessen the value of his argument. We shall give them in abridgment, first observing that he never loses sight of the fact that this dominion has to be especially exerted over our own inferior and sensual nature.

Man is God's image, he says, in the empire which he holds over the inferior creation, and he is God's likeness according to the measure of human power, by meekness, gentleness, and the virtues; even as Christ has said: "Be ye like to your Father who is in heaven." As in this wide and spacious earth some animals are tame and others fierce; so in the breadth of our soul some thoughts are irrational, flocking like silly sheep, others are wild and fierce. They need to be ruled and to be brought under the dominion of reason. If men can overcome lions and bring them to gentleness, is it to be doubted that they can subdue their own wildness? The beast that is fierce by nature, can be made gentle beyond his nature: man who is gentle by nature, can make himself fierce beyond his nature. Yet if you can take from the lion what belongs to his nature, and can put in him a gentleness that does not belong to him, you may surely recover that gentleness which properly belongs to your own nature. There is a prodigious obstacle to the taming of a lion, for he has not the light of reason, and yet men by using their own reason can succeed in making him subject and obedient, and can exhibit this skill of theirs for money. But God has given reason to you, and the fear of Him, and all kinds of help, so that if you choose to have dominion over your inferior nature, you may become meek, and gentle, and equable.

The unbeliever will say that God has not given dominion to man over the beasts, and that they have more power over him than he has over them. This is not true, because they fly before

* S. Greg. Nyssa, *De Humano Opificio*, cc. iv. v.

him. If when pressed by hunger they rend and tear him to pieces, that is not because he did not receive dominion over them, but because he has become a criminal. We now hold those wild creatures in fear and dread, but this does not falsify the promise of God. It was not so from the beginning; for then all the beasts feared and reverenced their master; but when through our own disobedience we lost confidence before God, our sovereignty over these creatures became weakened. That they were all subject to man in his innocence we learn from the Scriptures: "The Lord God brought them before Adam to see what he would call them: for whatsoever Adam called any living creature, the same is its name." He shrank not from their presence, but he gave names to them as a master names his servants, and that in token of his dominion over them. When Eve was innocent, the serpent inspired her with no terror; but when sin entered into man this dignity and power sank into weakness. So long as he trusted in God all creatures feared him, but when he transferred his trust from God to himself, he not only had to fear the excesses of the beasts, but even those of his fellow-creatures.

These very fears prove the benignity of God to him, for if he had been left in all his honour and power, it would not have been so easy for him to rise from his fall. With what an unspeakable benignity was he treated! Adam transgressed the whole law of God and subverted His whole commandment; yet in His merciful goodness God took not all his honour from him. He cast him not down from all his sovereignty. He withdrew from us a great measure of our power over those animals that contribute but little to the service of our life, whilst he still left those under our complete dominion that are most useful and necessary for our service. In punishing man for his disobedience, He said: "In the sweat of thy brow shalt thou eat thy bread;" yet lest that sweat and labour should become intolerable, our God alleviates our toil and suffering through the multitude of His creatures that both toil for us and suffer with us.*

If the wild animals when clothed in their strength inspire us with fear, they also remind us of the strength and the wisdom that we ourselves have lost by our disobedience, and of the dignity that we have lost with the loss of innocence. But in punishment for our

* S. J. Chrysost. *Hom.* 9 *in* 1 *Genes.*; *Serm.* 1 *et* 2 *in Genes.*

trifling with God's divine sovereignty, we are subject to still greater humiliations, and the smallest of living creatures have the power to annoy us with their noxious importunities; and as the executioners of our mortality, they breed in us the most terrible diseases.

Yet when we look through the history of faith and sanctity, we find many examples of the restoration of that prerogative of dominion to man over the wildest and the most ferocious creatures, that recall to our minds what power he had in the state of innocence. Noah by faith commanded all the animals in the ark. Elias was served by ravens and protected by bears. Daniel commanded the lions in their hunger and ferocity. St. Paul held the viper in his hand without injury. Lions and wolves were obedient to the holy hermits of the desert. The most ferocious animals in their most ravening moments were seen by fifty thousand persons in the Roman amphitheatres, crouching meekly at the feet of the Christian Martyrs, and refusing to do them any harm. Even the devouring element of fire sometimes refused its office of destruction. But cruel man, left ever to his own free will, stepped in to inflict their martyrdom upon the saints with tortures and the sword. "The time would fail me," says St. Paul, "were I to speak of Gideon, Barac, Samson, Jephtha, Samuel, and the Prophets: who by faith conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners: women received their dead raised to life again."

The second Adam, Christ our Lord in His humanity, who was the full image of God with perfect innocence, commanded all nature at His will; yet he withheld this will from command when His object was to be hidden or to suffer. And this power over the inferior creation He promised to the obedience of perfect faith, to that faith which with unwavering constancy trusts wholly in God and nothing in self. When the disciples saw the unfruitful fig-tree withered up at their Lord's command, and wondering said: "How is it presently withered up," Jesus said to them: "Amen, I say to you, if you shall have faith, and stagger not, not only this of the fig-tree shall you do, but also if you shall say to this mountain: Take up and cast thyself into the sea, it shall be done. And all things whatsoever you ask in prayer believing, it

shall be done to you." Among his last words on earth He also said: "These signs shall follow them that believe. In my name .... they shall take up serpents: and if they shall drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them: they shall lay their hands on the sick, and they shall recover."

The justice, therefore, that comes to us through mercy, has ordained, that, on our return to perfect faith and obedience, some portion of our lost dominion shall return to us, sufficient, at least, for our edification and instruction, and for a visible proof that God is with His servants. When, however, the wildness of nature and the adverse elements of the world continue their hostility against the holy servants of God, they are still the servants of the Cross of Christ, and the ministers to that patience by which the Kingdom of Heaven is won. But all the creatures that serve our will, or administer to our wants, or to the work of our probation, have their force from Him without whose providence they can do nothing. But as God works without ceasing in them, for our use and benefit, why should we refuse to work with them for His service, and to His glory?

God has not only devoted the inferior creation to our service, but also the superior creation. For, not to speak of the countless services which, under the direction of God's providence, men render to each other, both with intention and without intention; from His Heavenly Hosts our Divine Father sends His angels to us, to help, guide, and protect us; so that we are served from heaven as well as from the earth. Considering, therefore, what innumerable servants God puts at our disposal, both conscious and unconscious, we may conclude what great service we owe to Him, whose chief object in all these helps is to draw us gratefully to Him; that to Him may be given the honour and the glory that is due from all His creatures.

That we may take a deeper and wider view of the divine plan of this earthly creation, let us consider more carefully what is the position of man in the midst of it. Composed in such a manner of soul and body, that of the body the soul is the form, life, and animating principle, whilst the body, as the instrument of the soul, holds commerce with the whole exterior and visible creation, this intellectual spirit and mortal flesh exist together in a wonderful and inexplicable communion of life and personality. The soul lives in herself, yet dependent on God; lives with the light of God's

truth in her mind, with the greater light of God in her faith, and with a spiritual sense that feels after divine things. She lives also in the body, giving life and animation to its senses and activities, which are in contact with the whole visible creation. The soul thinks through the mind, feels through the senses, and acts from the will. But whilst the truths of the invisible world are imparted to the mind, and terminate in the superior soul that looks to truth; the messages from this visible world come through the senses, and terminate in the imagination, that inferior side of the soul that is in commerce with the body.

But as the soul herself is one and simple, the imagination, which receives the images of things from the external world, is intimately united with the intelligence in which dwells the light of truth. Thus, whilst the light of truth in the intelligence tests the truthfulness of those images that are present in the imagination, the imagination itself has an office to perform towards the purely spiritual truths that are given to the mind; for the wealth of imagery in the imagination obtained from the visible world, serves to illustrate those pure truths with the earthly shadows of them that abound in this material world. Thus, whilst the soul is one and simple in herself, on her superior side she holds to spiritual truth, and gains the sense of spiritual things; whilst on the inferior side she holds to the body, and receives the impress of those earthly things in their images, which divide her attention, and which either enrich her when she uses them justly and wisely, or trouble her when she uses them unjustly and unwisely. She is therefore spiritual when she subjects her senses to her spiritual will, and carnal, when she subjects her spiritual to her sensual life.

Like understands like. When the soul, made in God's image, is subject to the light of faith, and in obeying the grace of charity receives the likeness of God; man becomes an *ouranos*, a little heaven, according to his measure and quality reflecting the heavens that are above. As in the composition of his body he has the elements of this visible world, the inferior man is a likeness of this world, receives the images of all visible things, and is thus a *cosmos*, a little world reflecting the great world around him. Thus Heaven and earth meet in the soul of the just and faithful man, that in his superior soul he may serve and worship God, and through his inferior soul the elements of this world may be brought into subjection to God through him.

This is the primary reason of that secondary image of God in man, which consists in his delegated dominion over the inferior creation. The man of faith, who is just to the divinely established order of things, is the living link between earth and Heaven, the spiritual bond of communion between the creature and the Creator. He subjects the world to himself, and himself to God. As God's representative he administers the things of this world, as they are committed to his keeping, and according to the will of his Lord. God has made him both king and priest, to rule them reasonably, and to offer them devoutly, to the praise and glory of their Creator and Lord. As they are devoid of reason, his reason supplies for them by his faith, and his devotion; in him as in a living temple God's image is set up, His likeness is exhibited, and His authority represented, that through him the inferior creatures may do homage to God, and render obedient service.

Taking this just view of man's position, the Fathers of the Church rival each other in finding terms to express the dignity of man in his offices to the world. They call him "the abridgment of the world," and "the word of the world." St. Gregory Nazianzen calls him "the observer of the visible world," and "the pontiff of visible things." Asterius designates him as "the interpreter of the Creator." St. Gregory of Nyssa calls him "the consecrator of the universe." Lactantius says: "He is in the world as a priest in a holy temple, where all things are made for him, as he is made for God; and where he contemplates the divine works that he may refer them to God."* These are not the exaggerated expressions of poets or enthusiastical humanitarians; they are the grave and well-pondered conclusions of theologians, who have weighed the sense of divine revelations, who exhibit the offices of men in the dignity which God has assigned to them, and who put them forth to enforce on man the sense of his responsibilities.

The Prophets are full of this view of man's position in the creation as its king and priest, and the inspired Psalmody, that divine song both of the Hebrew Temple and of the Christian Church, is deeply imbued with that spirit of devotion by which a tongue of praise and a voice of thanksgiving is given to man, with which to speak the language of gratitude to God for the whole creation. Take for example the 148th Psalm, or the Canticle of the three children in the fiery furnace, both of which

* See Klee's *Manual of Dogmas*, pt. ii. c. iii.

are used in the morning Lauds of the Church. There the tongue of man gives a voice both to the animate and inanimate creatures of God, that through him all mute and unconscious creatures, called upon each by name, may praise the Lord of Heaven and earth, and bless Him, and superexalt Him above all for ever. Whosoever shall enter into the spirit of this devotion and carry it out, as the saints have done, into their daily commerce with God's creatures, will comprehend the office and dignity with which God has invested man, of being the mind, the heart, and the voice of the dumb creatures of this earth to their Creator and Lord in Heaven.

If man would only rise up in mind and soul to the higher position which God has assigned to him in this earthly creation; if he would but understand the high honour and great prerogative which God has conferred on him, as his representative to the creatures that are made subject to his dominion; if he would enter into the design of God in making him the immediate end of those creatures; if he would only take it to heart that God has made them to do him service, that he may be able to serve God better, and to bring all God's works to do Him their service; if he would only use his intelligence to understand and feel that God has placed him, a spirit endowed with mind and law, in an earthly body, that through him all the earth and the heavens around the earth might do homage to God; if he would but fulfil this solemn office which God has assigned to him, ruling all things that God has made subject to him in the name of God, and by the law of God; accounting for all with God, and offering all to God; then would he be, what the saints with their keen intuition have always been, the faithful and disinterested stewards of God over the inferior creation, and the assiduous ministers of that creation unto God. But "when man was in honour, he did not understand; he was compared with foolish beasts, and became like to them."

He who rules not himself can rule nothing rightly. Remember then that the earth begins for us in our own body, and that the beginning of our dominion over the earth is the subjection of the body to the soul. The senses are the instruments of the soul in her communications with the inferior creation, and the body is the minister of her will, but how can we govern wisely through a rebellious minister and with indocile instruments? The first principle of dominion, therefore, is the subjection to the soul

of that quickened earth which forms our own body. This sacred duty is founded in the nature of things as well as in the command of God. It is essential to the internal order and to the intellectual as well as the moral strength of man. It is imposed upon us by the eternal law of justice. It is absolutely indispensable to our own well-being. Unless our body, with its senses, appetites, and passions, is made subject to the law of our mind, what have we in contact with the external world that is not disordered, enfeebled, and let loose from responsibility? The spiritual soul, whose proper endowments are light, law, and love, suffers an invasion of dark, earthly, and lawless things, that break down her unity, put out her light, and defile her love. What is left to the soul after that, which is not weak and unsuited to her nature and aspirations?

The inferior nature takes God's place in the soul; and in one way or another, earth usurps the dominion of spirit, and death of life. The man becomes "carnal, sold unto sin." Yet the divine gifts of God are not for the earthly man, nor can they be; the carnal man cannot receive them; as they are in their nature spiritual, and their end is God, they can only be received by the spiritual man. When a soul deserts her place, and comes down into the body to be inebriated and saturated with earth and carnality, that soul deserts her spiritual office, and is a traitor to her spiritual nature. How can such an one rule the inferior creation when that lower creation is ruling her? Instead of being the image of God, the Lord and Master of all dominion, the soul becomes the image of things viler than her nature, and created for her service. It follows, therefore, as a matter of course, that when man fell from God, and lost his spiritual strength, and the dominion of his own body, he of necessity lost the first great power that he had over the exterior creation. But in the proportion in which he recovers dominion over himself, he recovers dominion over the world around him, for the secret of that dominion lies in his own subjection to God.

The first great crime after the fall sprang from the pride engendered by dissent from the true worship of God. Whilst the evil yet brooded in the heart of the criminal, God proclaimed to him the law of self-dominion. Of the two sons of Adam, Abel offered a sacrifice pleasing to God. It was divinely accepted, because it was an obedient worship. For God alone can prescribe how He

will be worshipped, and it is not for man to choose. Abel offered a bleeding victim in faith and in figure of the promised Redeemer. Cain made his own choice of an offering, presenting the fruits of the earth; but when Cain saw that his brother's sacrifice was accepted, whilst his own offering was rejected, his pride was fired, and his wrath enkindled, and he meditated the destruction of his brother. Then God said to Cain: "Why art thou angry? And why is thy countenance fallen? If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? But if ill, shall not sin forthwith be present at the door? But the lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it."

It is impossible for us to realise how much the body has been enfeebled, and its obedient flexibility to the will diminished, through the loss of immortality. From the effects of original and even of actual sin, there is also a great weakening of its vital energy; the soul has less power over it; the functions of the senses are lowered in strength, the active offices of the earthly frame are less energetic, the sure and ready command of the will over the body is checked and resisted both by its dulness and its adverse inclinations. Above all, the body has become disordered and indocile through the lurid flame of concupiscence, that lusts against the spirit: and what is most humiliating, the feeding of the body is the feeding of that concupiscence; the very resting of the body overmuch is the quickening of that concupiscence. To this again we must add those inherited disorders and enfeeblements contracted from unwise and unrestrained habits that are transmitted from father to son to the third and fourth generation, and all those undefinable evils that flesh is heir to. As, therefore, our mortal bodies are not regenerated in baptism like the soul, but must wait for its regeneration in the resurrection, the exercise of dominion over the body, its senses, appetites, passions, and resistances, has become a work of great labour, watchfulness, and virtue, the power of which is only to be gained through the grace of God, and obedience to the law of self-denial.

The external senses are far from being the full account of the sensual man. Let me, therefore, invite your special attention to what follows. We have internal as well as external senses, and to these internal senses those that are external are subservient. Then there is the imagination, that beautifying, that terrifying,

that exaggerating faculty, especially exaggerating when not duly governed, in which the objects transmitted in their images from the corporal senses touch upon the soul and the intellectual light of the mind. It is in the imagination that the objects of sense, concupiscence, and passion, meet and conspire together, and by their united influence often gain the mastery over us, when not kept in just and due control.

It is chiefly the tide of our internal sensations, however little noticed, that gives us the consciousness of our animal life. This tide of internal sensations is intimately connected with the fluids and their circulations, giving us pleasure in their healthy flow, and trouble or distress in their languor, obstruction, or derangement. The coursing of the blood through the arteries and veins; the flashing of electric force through the centres and countless branches of the nervous system; the pulsations of the heart with their measured music; the working of the machinery of respiration with its dependence on atmospheric conditions; the action of the glands in their functions of secretion; the complicated laboratory of digestion; the removal of wasted tissues; the flame of animal life with its ever-varying temperatures; all these concur to keep alive in us the sense of our animal life, in its harmonies or discords, according to our state of health or derangements, of calmness or excitement, of subjection to the soul's dominion, or of rebellion against the soul's authority. This is but a brief and rough account of the elements of that internal sensation which are fed by the external senses; and to this we must add the active operations and exertions of the body, as it is the subject of the will, or as it is the instrument of our earthly desires and appetites. We do not even perform the spiritual operation of thinking in our present state, without the co-operative action of the brain, which depends for its healthy working upon the whole condition of the body.

We see, then, what a vast, what a varied, what a multiplied sense and movement exert their action within the body upon the soul, as she pervades and animates the body. When that complicated action is healthy, harmonious, and subordinate to the powers of the soul, then all is order and peace; but when that action is inflamed by concupiscence, excited by passion, disordered by unlawful appetite, or has lost the balance of temperance, the soul that gives herself to these ignominious move-

ments deserts her supremacy, surrenders her control, and falls in trouble and disorder under the dominion of the body. The soul becomes sensualised; her power of seeing truth is no longer the same, and she becomes averse and alien from the spiritual life, especially when she is not in the habit of denying or mortifying the body, or of abstracting herself from its restless solicitations.

But the things of sense obtain their power over the soul through their subtle union in the ill-regulated imagination, where, as we have said, they gain a prodigious exaggeration of their value, through the contact of their presence in the imagination with the intellectual light in the mind. By an abusive subjection of our mental and spiritual light to the images of these earthly things, they obtain a semblance of good and of greatness that does not belong to them, but only to the spiritual and eternal things which that intellectual light illuminates; and thus the poor soul, in losing her proper elevation and dominion over the body, loses her government over both sense and imagination, and falls under the vile things beneath her which God made her to command. "The lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it."

From this great force of the human imagination; from the misapplication of the light of intelligence to exaggerate the objects of imagination; and from the vast range of objects presented by the external world to human appetite and concupiscence, man is the unhappy subject of so many temptations and passions. And where there is no habitual conflict of the soul with the body; where there is no rule of discipline to control its importunities; where the appetites and tempers of the body are allowed their sway, there is such a subtlety in winding to their objects, such an exaggeration of their value, such a mask of delusive motive raised in the imagination, such a curiosity for new experiences, such a fancy and hope of pleasure in them, such a pride of anticipated possession to be got out of them, such a vanity in the expected display of them, such a sensitive consciousness in self-love of the coming enjoyment from them, however quickly it may fade upon possession, that the overmastered soul finds her spiritual strength dissolved in the carnal concupiscences of the eyes, the flesh, and the pride of life.

With his deep insight into the relations of soul and body, and of what originates in each of them, St. Paul has declared a number

of vices, that seem at first sight to originate in the soul, to be manifest works of the flesh. Among these he enumerates "enmities, contentions, emulations, wraths, quarrels, sects, envies." He even ascribes heresies and false philosophies to the same carnal origin. "Beware," he says, "lest any man cheat you by philosophy and vain deceit; according to the traditions of men, according to the elements of this world, and not according to Christ." Again he says: "Let no man seduce you willing in humility and religion of angels, walking in things which he hath not seen." These passages refer to the errors of Simon Magus and the earliest Gnostics, who imported the philosophic imaginations of the East into Christianity. In false humility and real self-will, they asserted that man was too low a creature to be created by God, and that he was consequently made by inferior gods, *eons* or angels, and that he was not redeemed by the Son of God, but by an angel in human appearance. But when the Apostle explains how a heretic of this kind corrupts the faith with false philosophy, he tells us that he is "in vain puffed up by the sense of the flesh."

It is obvious that the immediate cause of the vices enumerated by St. Paul as manifest vices of the flesh, is pride. But this pride is generated from that sensual self-love which oppresses the soul through the heat and swelling of the imagination, which has its source in the untamed spirit of the flesh. From this springs a false and fanatical enthusiasm, that takes a hot pride in self-opinion, and resists and opposes accepted truth as well as the authority on which it rests. For it is the nature of pride to withstand authority and to set up its own opinion against accepted faith. No one who has watched the rise of a heresy, or of a false philosophy opposed to religious authority, can fail to observe that it is accompanied with an imaginative and an animal enthusiasm, fertile in glowing words and sentences, angry against opposition, and the very opposite to that peace in believing which faith and true religion inspire, yet it always takes the shape of *negation* and *protest*. But this fervid ebullition of animal enthusiasm fails not to make the new opinions contagious among sensual minds; for the clouds that spring up from the earthly senses eclipse the light of faith, and generate that pride which contracts the mind, and narrows the perception of the large spectacle of truth. Pride of intellect, mistaken for inspiration, is the immediate cause of error, but sensitive self-love, engendered by the spirit of the flesh, is the

instigator of that pride. These victims of error are "in vain puffed up by the sense of the flesh."

Could we have stronger proof of the importance of keeping the body in subjection to the soul? The subtle emotions of the inward senses, fed into exaltation by the outward senses, when not mortified and subdued, inflate the soul through the imagination, and breed delusion and error in the mind, which the carnal heart accepts. These errors are not objective, then, but subjective, in their origin, springing not from the truth but from the man, as their negative character reveals. But when once formulated and accepted by numbers, on the authority of their originators, they obtain a certain objective appearance of the weight of authority, however devoid of solidity. Here let me observe, for the remark is of extreme importance, that the skilful physician of souls ought not only to understand the action of the soul within herself, but also the action and reaction of soul on body and body on soul; otherwise in mistaking the origin of internal troubles and delusions he will be apt to mistake their remedies.

Profound, therefore, is the significance and great the purpose of that conservative law which commands us to subdue the body and bring it under servitude. The man is chiefly in the soul, and pre-eminently in the image and likeness of God. To tame and rule the body is to assert the sovereignty of the soul, and to exalt the image of God. In this we see the incalculable value of the self-preserving laws of temperance, of abstinence, and of mortification, of all that is summed up in the divine words: "If any man will follow me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me." The spiritual combat of the superior against the inferior man is the law of self-restoration that follows the law of our redemption. "The lust thereof shall be under thee, and thou shalt have dominion over it," dominion not only over the gross and palpable lusts, but also over those subtle and secret lustings and inflations that prompt to pride and lead to error. This discipline of the body gives a concentrated force and vital energy to the soul, one great result of which is to change an insolent and dangerous enemy into an obedient and useful servant. But this cannot be done without long efforts conducted by rule and method; it cannot be perfected without that abstention from many things which the counsels of God prescribe as well as His commandments; it cannot be done effectually without sharp and vigorous appliances; nor without

habitual abstraction of soul from many things of a sensual nature that besiege the imagination. Still less can the conquest of the sensual man be won without habitual dependence on God for help. He who has never tried to win this victory can have but a poor notion of what there is within him to tame and to subdue, before he can obtain that freedom of spirit which makes us free in ourselves and free in God. But whoever has won this freedom, will see all things in a new light, and will understand them in a new sense.

Philosophy may dream of obtaining such a discipline in the abstraction of the mind from the senses. For how many ages has philosophy indulged in this dream? But abstraction of mind is not life. Without the charity that unites the soul with God, mere abstraction has nothing solid on which to rest. After all the soul is a spiritual substance and stands in need of a substantial good. But the mere philosophic abstraction of the mind from the senses is seldom more than a self-suspension for a time in the pride of intellect, after which there comes a terrible rebound and revulsion to the sensual man. A Plato may soar into lofty speculations, and may carry them far; but was there ever such a licentious system of morals as that which he drew up for his ideal republic? The natural man, however sublime in genius, is still the natural man, too weak in himself to effect his own liberation. Detached from faith and from God, he may entertain the most seductive speculations on what befits humanity, but we have too often seen what comes of human freedom, of human dignity, and of human safety, when the attempt is made to reduce these speculations to practice. It is only by obedience to faith and to God's will, that man is able to regain the lost supremacy of soul over body.

St. Paul has put the subject of this conflict before us in these searching terms: "I am delighted," he says, "with the law of God, according to the inward man; but I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is, in my members. . . . . For they that are according to the flesh, mind the things that are of the flesh; but they that are according to the spirit, mind the things that are of the spirit. For the wisdom of the flesh is death, but the wisdom of the spirit is life and peace. Because the wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God, for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be. And they who are in the flesh cannot please God. . . . Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the

flesh, to live according to the flesh. For if you live according to the flesh you shall die; but if by the spirit you mortify the deeds of the flesh, you shall live. For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

It is an inexorable condition of human nature that no one can work out his internal freedom without the help of God. It is the liberating grace of God that takes him out of bondage to himself, and gives freedom to his mind in the light and to his heart in the love of God.

But whilst God has given us this secondary image of Himself in the dominion over the body and the inferior creation, He has not given us this kind of dominion over those who are equally the image of God with ourselves. Wherever that image exists, it claims our respect, reverence, and fraternal service; but the image of God in one man is not to be the servile subject of another. This is the error of unregenerated man, or a very great abuse among regenerated men. The government of Christian men is more a kindly service than an exercise of dominion. And our Lord, who has rectified all things, has said: "You know that they who seem to rule over the Gentiles lord it over them; and their princes have power over them. But it is not so among you; but whosoever will be greater, shall be your minister, and whosoever will be first among you, shall be the servant of all." "In the just man's house," says St. Augustine, "they who govern are the servants of them whom they seem to command. For God would not have the rational man, made in His image, to hold dominion over others than the irrational creatures—not man over man, but man over the beasts of the field." *

The subject would be incomplete were we to conclude without pointing out how the grace of Redemption tends to restore the earth to God through the regenerated, in whom the former dominion over the earth revives. This has been already shown in the power given to the martyrs and saints over wild and destructive animals. It might be equally shown in the miraculous powers promised and given to men of great faith over the order of nature. Everywhere great monuments exist, or have existed, of the priesthood which men have exercised on the part of the inferior creation towards God, as well as on the part of their own souls. The land of the Patriarchs received the divine blessing, and its first-fruits were

* S. August. *De Civitate Dei*, Lib. XIX. c. xv.

offered to God, or to man as the image of God in his needs. The choicest of the flocks and herds were immolated to God in the sacrifice of faith, and in the hope and expectation of human redemption. The whole Mosaic dispensation rested on this principle, that the land which God gave them was under His own sovereign dominion, and that their judges and kings were but the lieutenants of God, to order the land and govern the people according to His divine law. One tribe of twelve was consecrated to God's service: and whilst the land was placed under the divine benediction, one tenth of its produce was devoted to God's service. Whatever was most beautiful or precious in the material creation was raised to greater beauty and expressiveness by the feeling and skill of the best artists, and was consecrated to the honour and worship of God. The princes and people in their tribes and families were constantly realising in their life and worship, that "the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof." Their prophets kept ever before them, that on their obedience to the law depended their dominion over the land, and their enjoyments of its fruits.

But in this faithful restoration of the silent creation to its Divine Creator, what did faith in the expected redemption accomplish, when compared with what faith in our redemption received has accomplished? Wherever that faith has appeared in its Catholic fulness, whether in rude or civilised nations, one of its great instincts has been to devote all things best in the creation to God, whether to His immediate worship, or to His service in the exercise of charity to the helpless and the ignorant. Great souls made great by great faith and charity have been the great Christian providences of the world in restoring something of that equality of goods, which has been made far more unequal by the selfish ambitions, cupidities, and other sins of men, than by the natural inequalities of skill and labour; whilst the faith of the multitude has followed in its degree the faith and works of the Saints.

Christ Himself ordained that the water which descends on the earth, the wheat that grows in the fields, the sun-nourished vine, and the oil expressed from the fertile olive, should become the expressive veils of spiritual sacraments. And all things most beautiful, precious, touching, or sublime in this visible world, enter into the language of faith for the illustration of eternal

things. Christ Himself made all things that are most homely and familiar to man in the creation the parables of his path, and conduct on the way to Heaven. The noblest inventions of the human mind and heart are industriously combined with the best materials the earth can afford to honour God in His temples and worship. Wherever a few faithful men are gathered, the Church soars above all human habitations, and proclaims the dominion of God and the supremacy of faith. In a country of faith, every point in the landscape that meets the eye is consecrated by a Church where God is honoured, or by the saving Cross, the symbol of the soul's dominion over the sensual part of man.

It would be long to tell how the promise of Christ has been fulfilled even on this earth, that "blessed are the meek, for they shall possess the land." But we may recall the long ages when monasteries of meek men, the practical philosophers of Christianity, devoted to the law of perfection, and convents of tender women, made strong by a like consecration and discipline, raised their great structures in every town and city; on the mountain side, in the green valley, and by the murmuring stream. These were the strongholds of God's law and counsels, and of the works of mercy spiritual and corporal. These were the mansions of peace, where prayer went up to God for all mankind, and the ignorant found light, the sorrowing comfort, the needy relief, and the houseless shelter; and all was done and given for the love of God. Hospitals opened their doors to the aged, the maimed and the sick, providing all things both for body and soul. It would be long to tell how much of this world's goods was devoted by faith, and even in these unbelieving times is still devoted by faith, to charity.

The redemption of Christ has therefore brought a certain deliverance even to the inferior creatures, and an exaltation of them towards their final end. Man repaired in the image of God, and reformed to His likeness, has recovered not a little of that secondary dominion both over himself and over the inferior creation, especially by the law of self-denial. The more of spiritual life he recovers, the higher his dominion rises over sensible things, the more he spiritualises even those material and earthly things, and makes them the servants of his faith and charity. He thus becomes the true representative of God to the inferior creation, and the mind and voice of the inferior creation

to God. By the gift of faith he sees God more clearly in His works, and by the gift of charity he learns how best to use the works of God to their noblest ends. From the bosom of creation his sanctity can draw secrets that are hidden from the ungodly and the proud. A Saint Bernard will learn more of God among the rocks, woods, and solitudes of nature than from all his books. A Saint Francis will see God's love and tenderness in every living creature, however insignificant to less faithful eyes, and will converse with them as though they were his brethren. Saints have risen to God in rapture from looking into the serene heavens, or from contemplating the beauty of a flower. To read the Psalms with a Christian heart, is to feel how the inspired king made a harp out of the whole creation, on which to celebrate the power and the majesty, the goodness and the mercy, the tenderness and condescension of our Divine Creator and Provider. The Christian poets and Saints have followed the example of the royal Psalmist, and as the priests of nature, have given a tongue to all the mute creation, that through the heart of man they might render glory to their sovereign Lord.

LECTURE IV.

CREATION AND PROVIDENCE.

"There is no other God but thou, who hast care of all."—WISDOM 12, 13.

GOD is the one self-subsisting Being, the reason of whose being is Himself. He is the one all-perfect Being than whom nothing more perfect can be thought of. His Being and Goodness are one and the same, without beginning, limitation, or end of being. He has expressed His own absolute Being by the incommunicable name Jehova—*I am who am*. He has expressed His perfect unity by the term *I am, and there is no other*. The word *being* in its absolute sense belongs to God alone: the word existence properly belongs to the creation. God *is*, the creation *exists* from Him.

To define is to mark out the limitations of what is defined. It is obvious therefore that God is undefinable. To attempt to measure God by the light of human reason is to assume that He is not greater than the measure of human reason; but this is equivalent to denying Him. St. Athanasius observes with profound truth: "God is the definer of all definitions; He defineth all things, but cannot Himself be defined. He cannot be defined because His essence comes under no terms by which He can be expressed."*

Yet it does not follow because we know not God in Himself that we do not know Him in His manifestations of Himself. What do we know of any human being but what he makes known to us? We cannot see his spirit, or take the measure of his soul. We are not ignorant of God, of His attributes, or of His ways. God is present to our existence, which could not be without His presence.

* S. Athanasius, *L. Via Ducis*, c. ii.

He is present to the light of our reason that leads us up to Him: He is present to our conscience that proclaims to us His moral law: He is present to our life that derives its force from Him. God is present in His truth, is present in His law, is present in His providence and care of all things. He is present in an unspeakable manner in the splendour of His supernatural truth, mercy, and goodness, to our faith and love. For although the essential Being of God is to us incomprehensible, and His divine life inaccessible, yet He sends forth His light and His truth, and they lead and guide us to know more of God than of ourselves, or of any creature whatsoever. For what know we of any of His creatures but their surface qualities? What know we of ourselves, except what God has taught us? The inward nature and substance of all things are hidden from our sight. But in the light of God we see light, and in that light, which is its own evidence, we know that God is, and that whatever He is beyond our comprehension, to our most certain knowledge He is the Infinite Spirit and Eternal Life, and is Almighty, All-wise and All-good. We also know that God is the Creator, Lord, and Father of all things, and that He beholds all things, governs all things, and provides for all.

We know that God is the Truth, in whom, from whom, and through whom, all things are true that are true. We know that God is the Sovereign Life, in whom, from whom, and through whom, all things live that do live. We know that God is the intelligible light, in whom, from whom, and through whom, all spiritual creatures shine with the light of intelligence. We know that God is the Supreme Good and Sovereign Beauty, in whom, from whom, and through whom, all things have good and beauty that are good and beautiful. We know that God is the infinite happiness, in whom, from whom, and through whom, all are made happy who are happy. We also know that God is perfect Love, in whom, from whom, and through whom, all love God who do love God, and find their blessedness in loving God. We know that for an intelligent creature to turn from God is to fall; and that to return to God is to rise again; we also know that to abide in God is to have a firm and stable life. We know that to abandon God is to die; and that to come back to God is to receive life anew; that to think in God is to think securely; and that to dwell in God is to dwell safely. We know that no one loses God

who has not been first deceived; that no one seeks God who has not been divinely admonished to do so; and that no one finds God truly who has not repented of his sin. We know, in short, that he who denies God must perish within himself; but that he who sees God must first enter into the eternal possession of God, whose faith awakens us, whose hope gives us the desire of Him, and whose charity unites us with Him.*

How miserable, then, is the lot of those who muffle themselves in the unhappy delusion that they cannot know God, who is open to their knowledge as well as to every rational creature. The knowledge of God is the only sure foundation of every other kind of knowledge. What prevents their knowing God but the pride that closes their heart to Him, and darkens their understanding? The light that makes God known is near the sight, even when far from the vision of the understanding; for that light is in the summit of every mind, and in the depth of every conscience. But there are men who in their pride of fancied superiority look always downward, and look always away from the divine superiority; or if they glance upwards now and then, the sensual veil of creation is upon their sight, and the superior light of their mind is as far from their understanding as any star is from the earth. They see it as a point of light, but know nothing of what it contains.

Society is so great a perfection of life, that the pagans, who did not understand the nature of God, invented a society of gods after their own imagination. But the one and only God hath perfect society in Himself. He has revealed His social life to us, and we know the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the most wonderful, the most reasonable of all mysteries. The Three Persons in God are not as human persons, each of whom has a separate being; but they are the three divine terms or perfections of one infinite and eternal life. The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are one God; the life, truth, and charity of God are infinitely intercommunicated through the Divine Persons in the one substance of His nature. The three fundamental powers that unite in the substance of our soul is the created reflection of the Holy Trinity, so that the revelation of the Holy Trinity became as a revelation of the formation of our own soul, and the knowledge of our own soul bears testimony to the Trinity, as a shadow bears testimony to substance.

* S. August. *Encheiridion*, c. i.

The chief attributes of God are His power, wisdom, goodness, and justice. As His Being is the plenitude of life and blessedness, He is full with the glory of His substance, the splendour of His attributes, and the society of His personalities. But the perfection of God's life is expressed by His goodness, and it is the nature of good to be communicative of good. Generosity is the noblest and most active quality of goodness; we cannot understand goodness without generosity. It enters into the definition of living goodness, that it is an imparter of good. We cannot sufficiently dwell on this great principle, until we realise to our mind and heart, that it belongs to goodness to communicate good, and to the greatest goodness to communicate the greatest good. The infinite and eternal communication of the Divine goodness is complete and perfect in the inter-communion of the Three Persons of the Holy Trinity. There remains, then, but the sphere of limited existence to which God can still communicate of His goodness. For after the infinite there is nothing but the finite; after the eternal there is nothing possible but what is measured by time; after the unchangeable there is nothing possible but the changeable. Not only has God the disposition in His Divine goodness to communicate of His good, but also to exercise His attributes generally by their external manifestation in the sphere of limited things; not to His essential glory, which is always the same, but to His accidental glory, and, so to speak, His external glory.

Of His chief attributes, the Almighty power of God is manifested in the creation of a universe external to His nature; His infinite wisdom in the ordering of that universe; His Divine goodness in communicating good to His creatures, according to their capacity; and His perfect justice in ruling all things to the final end to which He has ordained them; or to which, where perverse wills desert His good, they are ordained by another order of justice.

Every good and intelligent agent works for a good end. As the best and most perfect agent, God must work for the best and most perfect end. But as God Himself is the best and most perfect end, it follows that He must make all things for Himself. This the Scriptures tell us that He does. It also follows that what is made nearest to God in resemblance, must be made more immediately for God, as more capable of receiving greater good

from Him; and consequently, that the intelligent creatures made to His image, and capable of His likeness, are made for God in a more excelling way. To them, therefore, He manifests His truth, and in that truth His power, wisdom, goodness, and justice. Those intelligent creatures are made, that God may communicate to them of His truth, His love, and His life. God is therefore both the final end and the final good of His creatures, but more especially of His rational creatures. Whatsoever they have in the present, whatsoever they may receive in the future, they receive from God.

Let us, then, keep these three fundamental truths in our constant view. First, the end that God proposes in creating is to manifest His attributes, and to communicate of His goodness. Secondly, the final end of the creation is God Himself. Thirdly, every creature is made to receive good according to its nature, measure, capacity, and disposition.

With these fundamental principles in view, we may now consider certain other great principles or laws of the Eternal Wisdom, as they are either manifested in the work of creation, or in the order of Divine Providence.

The first great principle to be observed is this—that although the works of creation are planned eternally in the mind of God, and have their eternal types in the eternal Word of God, they are executed in time, and are perfected with succession of time. To ask why the creation was not begun at an earlier time, is to forget that creation and time begin together, and that with everything created, its own time begins. Time is external to God, and is transient, as we know, and is the measure of succession and change that belong to creatures made from nothing.

The second great principle to be observed is the endless diversity of things, and of the forms of things that make up the created universe, each having its specific place and object in the general plan. To use the pregnant words of St. Thomas: "Owing to the distance of each individual creature from God, it was impossible that the divine goodness should be represented, except through a great diversity of things; so that what is wanting in one might be supplied by another. Yet the whole universe of creatures does not represent the divine goodness by any equality with that goodness, but only so far as the perfection of creatures is possible. The divine goodness is one and simple, and is the

root of all the goodness that is to be found in created things. But as individual creatures can but faintly represent the goodness of God, and each only in particular ways, it was needful that His goodness should be represented in many different things, which, by their unity of relation one with another, should reflect, in a certain way, the unity and simplicity of the divine goodness. That multitude and distinction of things was designed in the mind of God, and established in the creation, that the divine goodness might be in many ways represented in the multitude of created things, and that each in that endless gradation of creatures might partake of goodness according to its nature and capacity. Thus, from the whole order of things, so many and so different from each other, and from the mutual relations established between them, a great beauty appears which praises the wisdom of God."*

Limitation is everywhere visible, which is a certain proof that all these things have been created from nothing. Yet there is an ascending series of creatures from less to greater, the one subordinate to the other, each greater in proportion to the good that it receives. But the grandeur of the creation arises from the wisdom with which this vast diversity of things, each little in itself, is combined in one harmonious universe through countless adaptations of one thing to the other; element to element, one work of creation to another; one thing counter to another; whereby all things naturally contribute to each other, and provide each for the other, and balance each other. What is wanting in each particular work is provided from all the rest. In what does any creature resemble God more than in communicating of its good to other creatures, as God communicates of His good to all?

God is the first mover of all things. He impresses movement on irrational things for their preservation and for their perfection, and to fulfil their end. He plants the power of freewill and movement in His intelligent creatures, that by their own virtue they may strive for the divine likeness. All the movements and the powers of action given by God to His creatures are for the sake of the divine goodness; not because they can increase that goodness, but that they may each according to their nature gain some participation of that goodness, and may reflect something of that goodness. But the climax of this creation is the human soul, in which all the different species of creation find their unity. For

* S. Thom. *Compend. Theolog.* c. cii.

whereas each species of creature beneath man has but its own form, the light of his mind is so wonderful, that it is capable of receiving the forms of all creatures, in which they are mirrored in a unity that in a human way resembles the perfect unity in which all things are contemplated in the eternal mind of God. Why is this wonderful light given to him, but that he may learn in that light which God has shown to him, to see all things in God, and to refer all things to God, in Whom all things have their end. Thus He who creates all things, provides for all things, and delights in making His providence conspicuous. From the attraction or repulsion of particles of matter to the musical movement of the great orbs in the heavens, all things are ordained and fitted to each other in number, weight, and measure. From the first wailing of the new-born infant to the lofty contemplation of the theologian and the ardent love of the saint, God has disposed ascensions in the heart of man, from earth towards the gates of Heaven, and from the gates of Heaven to His eternal presence.

Why do we boast our science, and pride ourselves on our skill? God is the one great Metaphysician, who creates and illuminates all spirits. God is the great Theologian, from whose light and truth all theology descends. God is the Divine Astronomer, who orders the heavenly bodies and sets them in their movements. God is the Geometrician who gave to all things their number, weight, and measure. He is the Geologist who framed the earth on its rocky foundations; the Botanist who planted the woods and shrubs with their flowers and fruits; the Naturalist who constructed the animal world; the Physiologist who formed the body of man with all its functions; the Biologist who gives life to all that lives. After men have toiled long, and often failed, they find out some little of His science, some lower manifestations of His wisdom, some partial examples of His operations, and then boast of them as their own. God is the sublime Architect of the universe, and the Artist of all the beauty that is seen in the world, drawing all its colours from the one simple element of His created light. All that human artists can do is to imitate His work, and to combine their imitations after a human measure. So true are the words of the Psalmist, that "the Lord is the God of sciences," and that it is He "who teacheth science to man."

The third great principle or law is this, that everything is made for something greater than itself, and is made subordinate to that

end for which it was created. To give a broad example, the mineral creation is made to serve the vegetable creation, the vegetable creation to serve the animal creation, and the animal creation is subject to the human creation. But the human creation is immediately subject to God.

The fourth great principle or law of Divine Wisdom in the creation is of a most comprehensive character, and resumes the three already put before you. Every creature in its first creation has more of capacity than of actual good. At first it is more potential of good, than possessed of good; afterwards it receives the good that is proper for the perfecting of its nature. It is made to be receptive of more perfect forms of good. It is begun in creation, it is perfected by the providence of God. Thus, what is begun by power is perfected by wisdom, which guides all things onward from their beginning to their completion. You may therefore say, that the greatest good of the creature in its beginning is the capacity that it receives for greater good, and that every creature, but especially man, is ordained to receive greater good in proportion to its nature, capacity, and end.

The fifth and last principle or law that I shall put before you presents a wonderful instruction, although but a crowning inference from the last. God creates every creature on the verge of that nothingness from which it came into existence, and with the least amount of perfection that is consistent with its nature, and with the end for which it is made. Yet he gives to it a great amount of potentiality or capacity for good. He thus marks upon that creature the nothingness from which it came, and that in a way that can never be effaced. It bears upon it the everlasting remembrance of its origin from nothingness. Then He delivers over the work of His creative power to be perfected by His wisdom, His goodness, and His providence, with course of time; so that all the steps of His progressive goodness may be made sensible to His intelligent creatures.

Let us now explain by example what we have already set forth in principle. Although our knowledge of the angelic nature is limited, we know that they are pure spirits. We also know that they are one thing by nature, and altogether another by the divine gifts of supernatural light and grace which they received upon their creation. When first created, they were neither just nor unjust; they had never exercised their intelligence nor their will;

they had neither virtue nor knowledge. But their natures were made with a great capacity for receiving supernatural light and grace, and for receiving divine good. Yet, although pure intelligences, their created nature neither gave them the supernatural light of divine truth, nor the grace that brings spirits to God as to their final end. They were placed in a state of trial suited to their nature, as man is placed in a state of trial suited to his nature. As they did not proceed one from another like man by generation, each angel is a separate species, and the difference of their several qualities and excellences must therefore be incomparably greater than is to be found in the human race, which forms but one single species. For God never repeats Himself in His works.

Their thousands of thousands ascend from lower to higher orders of excellence and gradations of intelligence, beauty, dignity, and function; and the higher enlighten the lower orders, as men of greater intelligence enlighten those who have a less degree of light and knowledge. Hence the power of the great cherub Lucifer, the light bearer, to draw so many spiritual stars after him to ruin, not by force, but by temptation. For although the greater number, faithful to the divine help, stood firm, whole legions turned from God, after Lucifer's example, and trusting in themselves they found out their nothingness, and became creatures of vanity, and proved the weakness of their nature in giving up their dependence on God. For by confiding in themselves they lost the gifts of God, and the bright path that leads to the vision of God. They fell into ruin, and found nothing but their nature in disorder, their crime, and their desolation. Let any one read the book on the Celestial Hierarchy, ascribed to St. Dionysius, or the masterpiece of St. Thomas on the same subject, and he will find in them a most instructive illustration of the principles that we have put before your minds.

Of the earth and its inhabitants we have a more precise and definite knowledge. For although the angelic hosts were the only created witnesses of the creation of this world, that in the morning of this creation before our morning dawned they might give due glory to our Creator; yet God Himself has revealed to us the history of this creation, that man might know his origin, and the origin of the world where he is placed, and might not ascribe to the creature what belongs to the Creator.

The revelation of the creation and formation of this world by

its Divine Author is a most wonderful instruction, of which man stood in need, and with which the goodness of God has provided him. The real investigators of the world have confirmed the great principles of that revealed instruction; even though the Scripture is still true, that "He hath made all things good in their time, and has delivered the world to their consideration, so that man cannot find out the work which God hath made from the beginning to the end."

The distinction between matter and form pervades the whole nature of things created. The forms of things determine their matter, make them what they are, establish their kinds and species, adapt them to their objects and uses, and dispose them to their ends. It necessarily follows that the forms of things are superior to their matter. Matter is created from nothing; it is but initial being, although it cannot exist without some kind of form; but the forms of things have their primal origin in types that exist in the eternal mind of God. These forms of things, as they are imprinted in the creation, give us certain vestiges or shadows of the attributes of God in the material creation, and certain resemblances to God in the spiritual creation. This is the reason why those faithful souls whose minds are full of God can see His footsteps in every part of the creation, and why, like the Holy Scriptures, they can draw so many and such various figures from the creation with which to picture the grandeurs of God, although they know them to be altogether inadequate, as language is inadequate, to give the full expression of their inward sense of God. The distinction, therefore, between matter and form is no invention of the Greeks, although their acute minds gave the distinction its precision. It exists in the nature of things, and pervades the Mosaic account of the creation.

"In the beginning God created heaven and earth, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God moved over the waters." Time begins with creation and belongs to the creation. Time therefore begins when God creates the angelic natures and the material elements of the earth. The first creation of this world is of chaotic matter, without more form than is necessary to its existence, which is mere initial being, nearest to that nothingness from which at the will and word of God it came into existence. It is impossible to imagine anything more remote from the perfection

of God than this first existence of rude, unformed, elementary matter. Then the Spirit of God, the Divine Wisdom that perfects all things, moved over the deep chaos of matter, to bring all things in their time to their perfect forms and kinds.

Let us now turn to St. John's Gospel for greater light. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by Him; and without Him was made nothing that was made." It is written that God made all things in wisdom, and that wisdom "reacheth from end to end of all things mightily, and disposeth of all things sweetly." The Word of God is the wisdom of God and the power of God, through whom all things were made. But the Word of God is the perfect form of God. The Eternal Wisdom, as the Book of Wisdom says of Him, is "the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of God's majesty, and the image of His goodness." St. Paul also says that He is "the brightness of His glory, and the figure of His substance, and upholding all things by the word of His power." When God "spoke and they were made," when He "commanded and they were created," He spoke through the Eternal Word.

"All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made." He created their substance from nothing by His Word, and gave to them their forms. As the form of what a man invents is in his mind before he gives that form to the material upon which he works, whilst the same form remains unchanged in his mind; so are the forms of all things eternal in the Word of Wisdom, certain copies of which He gives to the creation. Preaching on the text, St. Augustine expresses the great difficulty he has in making these truths intelligible to ordinary minds, yet the difficulty does not prevent his saying that the Divine Word is "the uncreated form, and the form of all things that are formed. He is the unchangeable form; the form that has no failure, no defect, no time, no place; the form that is above all things, and that is present to all things; who is the sure foundation in which all things are, and the divine canopy under which all things exist."*

All things were formed, therefore, through the Word of Wisdom. God speaks His word, and they exist. But the power of God first appears in making all things from nothing with a certain

* S. August. Serm. 122. *De Verbis Evangel. Joannis*, i.

initial form. Then His wisdom appears with His power, giving to the elements of His creation their distinctions, and the several forms that determine their natures, kinds, and species. Afterwards His goodness is exercised in a special manner; blessing His works and making them fruitful, as well in themselves as towards each other. With these blessings the great and continuous work of God's providence has begun the perfecting of His creatures, moving them by His divine influence to the help of each other, and conducting them to their special ends and to their final ends. But when man is created to crown the work, then, not only do the power, the wisdom, and the goodness of God shine forth to the intelligent soul from God, and from their signs in the creation, of which he alone of creatures has the knowledge; but the justice of God is made manifest, to regulate the conduct of his responsible free will.

Under the conduct of God's divine providence the changeable things of this creation, changeable because of their weakness, are perpetually undergoing changes of form, and passing through many transubstantiations. The mineral earth, for instance, is changed into vegetable substance, and loses its first form to gain another that is more perfect; the vegetable is changed into animal life; both the animal and vegetable are changed into the living form of the human body. The earth of which God framed the body of man, lost its first rude form in the most perfect of earthly formations.

The light of reason was implanted by God as the form of the human soul; and the intelligent soul became the vital form of the body with which man is invested. When the nature of man was completed, as he is intended for union with God, from the goodness of God through the operation of His Holy Spirit the Perfector, he received new forms of a divine and supernatural order into his spirit, that are above the powers of his nature, to dispose and prepare him for union with God. He received the supernatural light of faith to give him a divine knowledge of God and of himself; he received the supernatural gift of justice to keep his composite nature in due order and subjection; he received the supernatural gifts of grace to enable him to confide in God, and to love Him with a divine love above all the powers of nature. Thus the world ends in man, and man ends in God.

Who can say what those epochs of creation were that are called

days in the book of Genesis? Not to quote Clement of Alexandria or Origen, who interpret these days allegorically; not to quote eminent theologians who have adopted the same interpretation, it will be sufficient for our present purpose to quote St. Augustine. "It would be difficult," he says, "if not impossible, for us to think what days of this kind may be, and much more difficult for us to say what they may have been."*

After the creation of the elements in their first chaotic state, the first epoch of formation is the creation of light, and the separation of light from darkness. The next epoch is the dividing of the waters in their vaporous form above from their liquid form below; the waters then are gathered to their places and the dry land appears. Were the vapours that surround the earth to descend, and the polar ices to melt away, undoubtedly the earth would be overwhelmed with the waters anew. The elements have now been marshalled into broad masses with their due admixtures, and all is prepared for the creation of organic forms of existence. Then God created the vegetable world with its wonderful variety of form, beauty, and fruitfulness. But even the vegetable creation is without life, it neither knows its own existence nor the existence of its Creator. Then the heavens became clear, and the sun and moon were made to shine upon the earth. In the fifth epoch of creation God made the animal world to fill the seas, the air, and the earth. Yet though these innumerable creatures, of kinds so many, of forms so various, have their several instincts, and a certain conscious existence, they have no knowledge of their Divine Creator.

All things are now prepared for the reception of a creature far exalted above the already existing creations, of a creature that shall have the knowledge of his Divine Creator. All things are provided for his nourishment, his use, his instruction, and delight. Then comes the final epoch in which God crowns His work in the solemn creation of man, of a being that shall partake of earth and spirit, whose body shall be formed and nourished from the elements of this world; whose spirit shall receive its light, life, and nourishment from the spiritual world; who shall be the bond of intelligence between earth and heaven, between the whole creation and the Divine Creator. Yet observe this well, that though man

* S. August. *De Civitat. Dei*, Lib. I. c. vi. See Perrone, *De Deo Creatore*, pars 2, c. ii.

is perfected in manhood at his first creation, and not as we are completed by degrees from the germ, even in Adam the law is observed of beginning upon the verge of nothingness. First his body is formed into its wonderful organization from the finer particles of the earth. Then his spiritual soul is created, probably within the body, by a divine aspiration, whereby his soul was not only created but was informed with the light of reason, through which light he came to the knowledge of God, and of His works. But as he is destined for God, and God is his final end; he is put in this world as a place of trial, where his will may be formed and perfected in the virtues that lead to God. He therefore receives from the superabounding goodness of God those supernatural gifts that enable him to know and love God in a divine order above the powers of his nature, and is prepared by a divine principle present in his soul for his final union with God.

Man is the image of God in his reason, and much more the image of God in his faith. This the Psalmist understood when he sang: "The light of thy countenance is sealed upon us, O Lord." As man is known by his countenance, God is known by His image in our reason; yet He is far more known in a more perfect image when the light of faith descends to brighten and broaden the image already in his reason. But the likeness of God is imprinted by the grace of justice in the soul.

If you ask why God did not create all men together, each severally, as He created the angels? this is a profound mystery. It is the glory of God to vary His works, and to exhibit the inexhaustible riches of His creative power. Each work is therefore more wonderful than that which preceded. God is the first cause of all things; but He exhibits His power and munificence in placing the principle of causation in certain of His creatures, whereby one thing proceeds from another; as, for example, the grain from the wheat, the fruit from the tree, and mature age from childhood. As God is the principle of all things, He gave to the first man a special resemblance to Himself, in making him the first principle of the whole human race, a resemblance that does not attach to his descendants with the same fulness. The first man was also made the head and origin of the human race with an especial view to the second man, to the god-man, who, in foresight of the weakness and failure of the first man, should unite the nature of man with the godhead for ever in Himself, and become

truly the head and first principle of humanity, and the crown of the whole creation. The unity of the human race through generation from the first Adam, enables them to be regenerated in the second Adam, to obtain their restoration to God and their security in Him. The great scheme of making one man the first principle of all men as to the body, whilst it imposed a tremendous responsibility upon the first man, enabled the whole human race after its terrible fall to obtain another creation from the wonderful mercy of God from another first principle of the human race, who shall become the principle of human salvation.

As Satan, again, had abused the great gifts of God by aiming at becoming the principle of being, his gigantic pride and that of his followers was brought to shame in beholding a creature made lower than the angels, yet so formed by God as to be the principle and immediate cause of a countless multitude of human beings, to fill in Heaven the places they had lost. Then, in making the human race of one blood He made them one family, and thus provided for the existence of a special order of virtues among men towards each other; the marital, the parental, and the filial virtues, the fraternal, the social, and the political virtues. Even the body of Eve is formed from the body of Adam, that the unity of mankind from one might be complete, and that the institution of marriage might have a more profound signification, both in its order and its unity. Yet though Eve was framed in body from Adam, her soul was created by God within that body, and received from Him the illumination of reason. And although all men are generated in body from Adam, their souls are in like manner the creation of God, and each one severally by the implanting of reason is made after the image of God.*

The progression of creation from rudimentary germs, and from the verge of nothingness to their complete existence under the conduct of God's divine providence, is perpetually exemplified before our eyes in the growth of plants and animals; but it is much more conspicuous and striking in man, the distance of whose beginning on this earth from his final perfection in God is most amazing and incalculable. It is not so many years since you who listen to me had your existence begun in a mere germ of matter, you were but a speck in a region of darkness. Can anything be imagined more remote from the perfection of God? You were

* See Hugo de S. Victore, *Sum. Sentent. Tract.* 3, c. iii.

a feeble substance in a great hazard, yet with a vast capacity for greater good which as yet was in the hand of God and of His providence. Who can tell at what moment of what hour it was that God vitalised that germinal body with a living soul? That germ was nourished from your mother's blood into the child. That soul had its powers still folded in darkness like the rose in the bud, awaiting for another intelligence to unfold it into light and action. "I myself," says King Solomon, "am a mortal man, like all others, and of the race of him that was first made of the earth, and in the womb of my mother I was fashioned to be flesh. In the time of ten months I was compacted in blood. . . . . And being born I drew the common air, and fell upon the earth, that is made alike, and the first voice which I uttered was crying, as all others do." What conclusion did Solomon draw from his humble origin and dependent condition? He felt that God alone could perfect his nature. "Wherefore," he continues, "I wished; and understanding was given me; and I called upon God, and the spirit of wisdom came to me."

We see, then, how the existence of every man begins on the border of nothingness, weak, poor, dependent on God, and even on his fellow-creatures; rich in capacities and capabilities, to be filled in the course of time with material good and with mental good, with moral and with social good, with human and with divine good, through the benedictions that flow at God's command both from Heaven and from the earth, under the provision and guidance of His ever watchful, active, and fruitful Providence.

Let us come to that Divine Providence whose name is so sweet and beautiful, a name so full of power and significance to every just mind, a name so full of wisdom and goodness to every devout soul; yet so little comprehended by those who have not thought closely upon the subject. Divine Providence is the action of God over His creatures, preserving them in existence, nourishing their being, advancing their natures with the elements prepared for them; and giving growth above all to man from the elements prepared for him in all the world. In His supernatural Providence God also nourishes the souls of men with heavenly truth, and with divine gifts, that from their first and feeble condition they may advance to diviner forms of life, and may be brought to their glorious end in God. "In His hand are all the ends of the earth." "He openeth His hand, and filleth every living creature with blessing."

St. Justin the Martyr proclaimed that he would never have believed in Christ unless He had taught that God is the nourisher of all things. With what a surpassing beauty did the Son of God teach this truth, and urge upon men that they should depend by faith on God for all of which they stand in need. In a great parable he rebuked the folly of the man who relies on his own efforts more than on the providence of God, and who "layeth up treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God." He then said to His disciples: "The life is more than the meat, and the body more than the raiment. Consider the ravens, for they sow not, neither do they reap, neither have they storehouse nor barn, and God feedeth them. How much are you more valuable than they? . . Consider the lilies how they grow: they labour not, neither do they spin. But I say to you, not even Solomon in all his glory was clothed like one of these. Now if God clothe in this manner the grass that is to-day in the field, and to-morrow is cast into the oven: how much more you, O ye of little faith. And seek not you what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; and be not lifted up on high. For all these things do the nations of the world seek. But your Father knoweth that you have need of these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added unto you." What is the point of this teaching? It is this, that besides the general providence of God over all things whatsoever, there is a special providence over man, who as God's image is destined for greater things, and a most especial providence over the chosen men of faith who rest their full reliance on the providence of God. For God replies to faith with a grander providence of greater things. In the administrative order of that providence there are ascensions from less to greater things, that look ever to the final end; and when the man of faith looks to those greater things instead of laying up treasure in this world, he becomes rich towards God, and God provides him with those lesser things. Christ spoke of the general providence of God, when he said: "Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God? Yea, the very hairs of your head are numbered. Fear not, therefore: you are of more value than many sparrows." But of that most special providence which God exercises over them who seek Him above all things, He said: "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and His justice, and all these things shall be added to you."

Of this supernatural order of providence which responds with its power to faith, and overrules the natural order, the Church of God is the great witness. Take up her history, follow it from the beginning to the end, and you will see how many men of faith, how many apostles to the nations, how many founders of religious orders and institutes, how many workers of her greatest works, have abandoned all things in this world, have cast themselves on the providence of God, and losing all things, have found all things wherewith to accomplish their unselfish designs. For if God hath care of all things, He has a singular care of whatever is done by faith to the service, honour, and glory of His name.

The providence of God may be considered as it is in God, or as it is exercised in the creation. As it is in God, St. Thomas defines it to be "the reason by which all things are ordained by God to their end." As it is exercised in the creation, providence is the will of God, ordaining, providing, and governing all things towards their end. The whole economy of the created universe proceeds from the reason of God, and is put in force by the will of God; and although all the known attributes of God are concerned in the administration of the world, yet the wisdom, goodness, and justice of God are the most conspicuous in the work of His providence; the wisdom that knows all things from the beginning to the end, with all their capabilities and suitabilities; the goodness that provides for all according to their natures, dispositions, and requirements; and the justice that governs all intelligent creatures to their end, according to what their wills have freely chosen.

A shrewd writer has observed that there are four classes of persons who have great need to understand the ways of God's providence for the peace of their souls. The first are those who live in constant fear of things befalling them unhappily when least expected, and who suffer because they imagine they are suffering what by possibility they might suffer, which leaves them neither peace nor enjoyment in their life. The second are they who take to the directly opposite course, feeding themselves with vain hopes and projects, which they fancy depend on themselves for success, and never understanding that their success must depend upon their observing and following the course of providence. The third are the critics, who find something everlastingly to censure in God's economy and government of this world; as if everything ought to be managed according to their

short views and blinking lights. The fourth class are those who are called strong minds, because they are stiff and unbending to the truth; foolish minds, that imagine all things are subject to a fatalized necessity, and refuse to allow that they are guided by the divine wisdom and will, because they have not wisdom to guide themselves.*

There is a fifth class who are fond of the word chance, and ascribe most things to chance, finding the word very useful as a cover to their ignorance. With those who ascribe all things to chance, the following anecdote may shorten argument. The leading French infidels of the last century were assembled in society and indulging in their atheism, when Diderot exclaimed: "Let us appoint a defender of God." The Abbé Galianî was appointed to the office, and he said: "One day at Naples there was a man in our company who took up six dice, and bet that he would throw the number six. He did so, and this was within the limits of possibility. But six times running he threw the number six. Then every one cried out: 'The dice have been *dealt with*.' On examination this was found to be the case. Now, gentlemen philosophers, when I consider how the order of Nature perpetually returns, and how constant its movements are amidst such infinite diversities; when I also consider how this one chance preserves such a world as this which we see, notwithstanding a hundred million of chances that might derange its order, or destroy it altogether, I am led to exclaim that the world has been *dealt with*." This unexpected sally reduced the adversaries of God's providence to silence.

What need is there to prove the good providence of God, the conviction of which is in the depths of every human soul, the presence of which is everywhere manifest to those who are attentive to its operations. If the fictions of vanity, if the boastings of pride darken the view of God's fatherly care in certain perverted minds; and if others more from idle vanity than conviction, take up their shallow notions as a fashion, especially when the world goes prosperously with them; when God is too good to them to leave them in their folly, it generally requires but a little of His merciful surgery in the shape of trial and calamity to bring them to themselves, and open their eyes to the visitation of His providence.

* D'Argentan, *Grandeurs de Dieu*, c. xvi.

There are certain fundamental truths which are so open and sure to all well-disposed minds, and which so envelop our existence, that to enter into elaborate proof of them has the effect on simple minds of confusing what is clear, and of making a difficulty of what is both certain and obvious. Such are the existence of God and the action of His providence. Where there is error respecting them, it lies more in the wrong disposition of the person than in the want of evidence. Remove the moral malady, change the disposition, and the soul will recover her sight. Proof of these large and ever-present truths, as elaborated by the human mind, however valuable as tests of reason and science, tend rather to contract the breadth and fulness of that evidence which appeals to all minds and hearts alike. But to those who are indisposed to their truth, dry arguments are of little avail. If a man has a prospect before his eyes, and you attempt to prove by some dry reasoning that he sees it, you only divert his attention from the prospect. The proof is in his sight. What is rather needed, when we speak of God's providence, is such an exposition as will carry its own light, and will appeal to the light already in the mind. This is the method of the Sacred Scriptures. After the exposition of the creation, they are filled from first to last with the history of God's government of the world, and especially with His providential government of man.

But the whole action of that divine providence is not open to our view; there is much presented to view, and much left to faith. The reason of that providence is in God, whom no mortal man hath seen at any time. As the central point is equally present to every point of every circle drawn around it, so the mind of God is equally present to all times, and to the length and breadth of all things in all times. He alone has disposed the present for the future, and knows what the present will give birth to in the future. He has ordained that the grain shall die to bring forth the harvest, that tempests shall rise to purify the world, and that sorrows shall prepare the future joys. We see the grain buried, we shiver in the tempest, we are bowed down beneath our sorrow; but we have so much knowledge of the two sides of God's providence, that our hope instead of expiring enkindles under trial. The sun descends, and then, brought to ourselves, we think more of God and less of the world; he rises in renewed splendour and opens the world to us anew. So it is with the providence of God

it alternates in trial and consolation, trial brings us to ourselves, consolation to the good bounty of God.

We see the lower links of the chains of divine providence, but not those upper rings more golden, that are attached to the throne of God's government, where "clouds and darkness are round about Him." The action of divine providence is present to our view, but we see the course of that providence more completely in the past than in the present; for it is not of a moment, but is a continuous action, of which one part explains the other. For many things therefore we have to wait the interpretation of time—that is to say, the future providence will explain the present, to which now in its obscurity we attach our faith. We have the record of that divine providence, as exercised over a chosen race, preserved in the Holy Scriptures, and extending from the creation to almost the time of Christ. That divine record is pre-eminently a demonstration of the providence of God. It is continued through the history of the Gospel and the Church, as well as in the testimonies of profane history. Everywhere throughout the history of the world we may see the movement of God, and His government overruling the intentions of man. For man proposes, but God disposes. And when we compare the facts of history with the lights of prophecy, and place the declarations of God in the far past in conjunction with their fulfilment, we have a great witness from heaven confirmed from the earth, and a great witness from the past confirmed by the future of that past, that God provides for all events, whether with or against the intentions of His creatures.

We have the broad outlines of that providential action constantly before us in the world, with many striking examples to which we cannot close our eyes. But the divine counsels partake the qualities of being both communicable and unsearchable. The general reasons of God's government reach our understanding, whilst we are unable to assign the causes to all particular events. For example, we cannot say in this or that particular case why the good things of this world are given to this person, whilst evil things are allowed to befall another. And yet we know the general principle, that sufferings are allowed to fall upon virtuous persons for their purification, and that the good things of the world are often left to the wicked to furnish them with fancied security. But who shall say that the one will always remain good, or that

the other will always remain hardened? The future remains in the secret knowledge of God until the time of its manifestation.

We have larger grounds generally on which to see the providence of God in our own case than in the case of other persons, not merely because we are more interested, but because we know more of what God has done within us, and our interior history throws so much light upon God's external dealings with us. Where there is question, therefore, of God's moral government over the conduct of other men, we have often to stay our judgment, as we neither know their interior history nor can we divine their future; but a full knowledge of God's providence over the interior man is essential to the understanding of His providence over the exterior man. When the disciples asked Jesus: "Master, who hath sinned, this man, or his parents, that he should be born blind?" Jesus answered: "Neither hath this man sinned, nor his parents; but that the works of God should be manifest in him." This great affliction was therefore sent to this man from his birth as a special providence, and with a view to his supernatural end. The power of Christ was manifested in him, and the gift of corporal sight brought him to the light of faith and the grace of redemption.

The manifold providence of God is partly open to natural reason, but the great prospect of that providence awaits our faith. The greater circle of the heavens which embraces the smaller circle of the earth is not larger in comparison than the sphere of faith which embraces the sphere of reason. And as the heavens reflect their light upon the earth, so does faith reflect its celestial light upon our less expansive reason. But beyond the luminous sphere of faith there is the infinite sphere of God's eternal light, from which He sends forth His providential wisdom upon the world and its inhabitants, in secret as well as in open ways, that from what we see we may believe what we do not see, and may venerate the whole providence of God with humility, and entrust ourselves to its guidance with faith.

When we take the general result of the perceptions of mankind at large within the limits of reason, we find it proclaiming the providence of God with a loud, constant, and clear voice. But when we take account of individual men devoid of faith, we cannot fail to recognize a certain limited number of minds in unhappy discord with the common voice of humanity. For this or that

man's reason suffers obscurations, whether from the pressure of sensuality, the predominance of imagination, the inflation of pride, the love of singularity, the malicious disposition of the will, or the false point of view in which he puts himself. From some of these causes the reason of individual men gets beset with error, especially on a subject so vast in its comprehensiveness, so high in its ultimate reasons, and so complex in its manifold operations as the providence of God. But though the natural reason of man has a much shorter and weaker insight into the ways of God than faith, it conducts us to the door of faith, and there delivers us to a more sublime teacher, and more sure guide. Faith opens up to us a sublime prospect of truth which the unassisted eye of reason cannot reach, and gives a light, a strength, and a security to that reason which corrects its errors, and enables it to enter with wondering eyes into the revelation of God. In various parts of Holy Scripture we are taught that faith generates intelligence, and strengthens reason; that it opens the mind to truth with the power of a master, and plants within us the secrets of wisdom. In short, the whole experience of faith confirms the divine admonition, that "unless you believe, you shall not understand."

To faith, God has revealed the creation of the world, and the progressive order of its formation. "By faith," says St. Paul, "we understand that the world was framed by the word of God; that from invisible things, things visible might be made." To faith God has made known the great outlines of His providence from the creation to the end of the world, when all things are brought to their final end, and then will the course of providence be completed in the final judgment; then, and not till then, will the whole order of that divine providence be revealed to the glory of the Supreme Provider of all things.

In rapid sentences, St. Paul reminds the Hebrews how God conducted the children of faith under the special care of His providence during the whole length of time from Noe to Christ, giving them good for their encouragement, both human and divine, and sending them afflictions and trials for the good of discipline. He then concludes: "And all these being approved by the testimony of faith, received not the promise, God providing some better thing for us, that they should not be perfected without us." They could only be perfected in the vision of God,

from which they were withheld until their redemption and ours was accomplished, and they with us, could be united with the new and divine Head of the human race. Where St. Paul ends, the vision of St. John begins. In that wonderful Book of Revelations, the vision of the providence of God is opened in its great features to our faith from the beginning of the Church of Christ to the end of the world. There we see how God overrules the empires and nations of the world with all their power and passion to His own divine purposes. There we see how all things work together for the final good of God's faithful ones. There we see how the disorders that spring up in the world from the perverse wills of men, are directed in their results by God to a final order. There we see how the Eternal Wisdom superintends the conflicts between truth and error, between the Church resting on God for strength, and the world resting on its own ambitions, and how He guides those conflicts to their final issues.

In that divine vision, as in the history of the former people of God, we see the spiritual world ever actively concerned in the affairs of the human world. The angels good and bad, the ministers of heaven and hell, take each their side and share in the vast scene of toiling and contending mortals. The good angels exert their holy influence in the cause of God and of His servants ; the evil angels put forth their malignant influence in the cause of Satan, and of the persecutors of God's kingdom on earth ; until finally we hear the rejoicings of the blessed spirits for the victory of God's patient ones, and we see the final overthrow of the apostate angels, and of the human victims who have followed their apostasy. Then comes the final separation of the good and evil ; the providence of God from the beginning to the end of its reign is displayed to the intelligence of the universe ; and the exceeding goodness and wisdom of that providence is vindicated by the voice of Eternal Justice. Then follows the eternal joy of God's vision ; and the everlasting agony of those who have lost the everlasting good ; the eternal joy of those who to the end have loved God, the everlasting agony of those who to the end have revolted from the good for which they were created. Wonderful and awful is the history of humanity ! More wonderful and amazing is the history of God's providence in ruling the history of humanity ! But of all

things the most astounding is the perversity of man against the goodness of God.

It is not, however, the object of this lecture to treat the whole subject of divine providence, but rather to exhibit an outline of the relations between providence and creation, whose final object is to bring man to his perfection in God. We must therefore hasten on with our purpose.

God is just and faithful to His eternal plan. It is part of that plan that the material and irrational creatures obtain their end in the service of man; and as they are unspiritual and devoid of freewill, God governs them by the laws of necessity, and provides them with all the means to accomplish the ends for which they were created. It is the noblest part of the divine plan that man should obtain his end in God, which gives a nobler end through him to the inferior creatures that serve him; yet however he is divinely helped to that end, that help must be accepted by his will, and with the use of that priceless freedom that nothing can necessitate. For God has made him a cause to himself, and the cause within him must work with the Supreme Cause in determining his course, he choosing the good that is offered him, whilst the providence of God gives him the means to practise good and to avoid evil.

The great orbs of the universe seem to our eyes as though they were suspended upon nothing. God upholds and moves them with the balance of a twofold movement, by one of which they seek their centre, whilst by the other they seek to fly from their centre, and by this double movement, so finely balanced by the Eternal Wisdom, they run securely in their appointed courses. There is a twofold movement in every order and department of God's providence, one of which proceeds from the secondary causes which He has implanted in His creatures, the other from the primal cause of all, which is God's will, overruling the action of these secondary causes to their final ends. Among these secondary causes are the movements given to the elements of Nature, the powers of assimilation and growth given to the vegetable and the animal world, the powers of generation, and the instincts of sense and movement given to the animal world. These powers and movements given to the several parts of creation, and suited to their kinds and offices, may be considered as that first active providence which the

Almighty exercises in the very act of creation. But above this original provision of secondary causes implanted in His works, is that ever-active virtue and influence of the divine wisdom and will, upholding, superintending, disposing, providing, and governing all things to their final end.

But whilst the irrational creatures are governed by the laws of necessity, the rational creatures are governed by the moral law of God, who never interferes with the freedom of the human will, but gives higher motives to that will in a diviner light, and greater strength to that will in supernatural help, that the will of man may exercise a nobler freedom. Woe, then, to the man who transfers the necessity which he sees in the irrational creatures to the human will. He perverts the whole reason of his nature; and falsifies the whole character of that divine government under which he is placed. He puts himself at a point of view so utterly false, that, to be consistent, he must deny the moral government of God, and reduce man to a mere machine, acting only as he is acted upon, and left without choice to determine his conduct.

It is true that God is the disposer of the minds of men, because He is the author of their light, giving them more or less of His light according to His will and their dispositions. It is equally true that God disposes of the issues of human conduct; for man proposes and God disposes. What we are responsible for, what we are finally rewarded for, is our good will and intentions; but the results of our actions are in the hands of God's providence, to prosper and make them fruitful in this world or not, as He sees best for the general designs of His providence. For others are involved in the fruits of our works as well as ourselves, and it is not always for our own final good that this or that well-intentioned work should prosper. It is also true that God changes our fortunes as He judges best for our present discipline and final good, or as more conformable to His justice; and that He ordains the circumstances, or what we call the accidents, with which we are surrounded, and which have such great influence on weaker souls, although so little upon the stronger souls that seek their strength in God. Yet the will is ever free to work with or against the providential influences of God.

But, to come to the great point, what is the final object of that manifold providence which moves so many influences both

from earth and Heaven upon the soul of man? The great and final object of that providence is to awaken and advance the soul of man from things temporal to things eternal; from things changeable to things unchangeable. This explains the shocks and defeats, the disappointments and the sorrows that man is constantly encountering in this world. They belong to that providence of discipline that awakens man from the delusions of this life, and urges him to seek the better things. What is the light of his mind but a luminous pathway to lead up the soul to eternal and unchangeable things? What is the deepest seated appetite of his soul, but the sense of an infinite good after which he ought to aspire? What is the Revelation of God, but the manifestation of that eternal truth for which the man is in search? What is it but the making known of that divine good for which he was created? Why, then, will he prefer the changing opinions of man to the unchangeable truth of God? Why will he love the light and vanishing goods that contract his being with their earthly pressure, more than the divine and everlasting good, that enlarges his being beyond measure? The whole intent and purpose of God's providence is to advance His creature man from less to greater good, and from lower to higher virtue; from things temporal to things eternal; from things changeable to things unchangeable; that he may reach the divine end of his creation, and there find his perfection in God.

What we stand in need of is a deliverance from our own limitations, and from that self-seeking attraction that keeps us bound and cramped within those natural limitations. To seek the things above us, we need to be freed from the pressure of the sensual body upon the soul, from the excessive attraction of the external world upon our interests, and from the spiritual adversaries that war against our soul with error and temptation. But this implies a combat and a rescue. Our nature from its origin is weak and contracted; and after its fall from God, has become selfish, sensual, and sinful, contracting and enclosing us more and more within ourselves. The contracting elements of Nature and of sense first close in upon our soul, and these must be broken out and brought down to their proper places before the soul can expand in the light of truth, and rise with freedom to superior good.

A conflict therefore must ensue between light and darkness; between the infinite truth and the sensualized man: between good and evil. This contractedness of the self-seeking man, striving foolishly and vainly to make himself the centre of good, must be overcome before he can seek his true centre with love in the Supreme Good. This self-centring of the man is the work of that concupiscence of which we hear so much, but of which many of us understand so little; it is that threefold concupiscence of the flesh, the eyes, and the pride of life, which destroys the whole just and reasonable order of things. For the just and reasonable order of things requires that every free spirit or soul should seek the greatest good through the highest light in the mind, and from the deepest appetite in the will. But the combat by which a man is delivered from himself, by which his soul is set free, expanded in the truth, and advanced to the greater good, must of necessity be a combat against himself, against his own contracted limits, against the self-seeking vices of concupiscence, and against the powers of evil that invade him through his concupiscence.

The moral perfecting of man that delivers him from himself, and so from evil, and that prepares him for God, cannot be accomplished without this conflict with the seductive powers of the world, and with the spiritual adversaries of the soul. It is the conflict with these adversaries, and with his inferior nature with which they are allied, that brings into action and forms into habits, all the generous virtues of which he is capable. And as the chief object of God's good providence is to bring man to his moral perfection that he may come enriched to his final end in the Divine Perfection; it is a great part of that providence to provide for the formation of those vigorous virtues which perfect the spiritual man; permitting the approach of evil, and allowing many evils to conspire against him; that by a greater conflict he may accumulate a greater wealth of virtue; whilst a way is always given him to escape from his temptations, and the means are proffered him by which to triumph over them. Such is the wisdom and the goodness of God. Such is the glory of God in the conquest of evil.

The crowning providence of God is the Incarnation of His Eternal Word. This stupendous plan for restoring and perfecting the creation, whether we consider it in its elevation above

all His other works, or in the depths to which it descends, or in the intimate union that it accomplishes between God and the creature, or in its all-embracing efficacy of reconciliation and deliverance, is the most sublime of all the mysteries in which God has manifested His wisdom, His power, and goodness. It is a new creation of the most marvellous kind, as well as a new providence of the most wonderful order. It is the living key-stone of the living arch of that saving providence which overspans the intelligent creation; and of which the rainbow that God placed in the heavens was a symbol, for that He would no longer destroy man. Ordained from the beginning in contemplation of the weakness of human nature, and in foresight of his fall from God; the Divine Wisdom contemplated a greater creation of a greater man, made everlastingly secure by inseparable union with the person of His Eternal Word, in whom He might bring back the lost creation to Himself; in whom He might triumph in a more glorious conflict over the powers of evil; in whom He might restore all things to the way of their final end. The whole of God's government of this world is, therefore, regulated upon the Divine Economy of the Incarnation. The whole conflict of light against darkness, of the infinite against the finite, of good against evil, centres in the person of the Son of God made man.

In all ages onwards from the fall, men have sighed and sought for, and even expected a Divine Deliverer from evil, and a bringer of divine good. This was by no means limited to the prophetic line and the prophetic people, although the promise of God shone through them to the nations. The Word of God was already in the world, although the darkness did not comprehend it. Through Him the world was made, and the footsteps of His presence were everywhere. There was nothing formed in anything of which the type was not in His Eternal Mind. But the soul of man is an image of Him who is the Divine Reason. For what is the reason of man but a certain participation, however shadowy, however reflected, however remote, however diminished, of the light of the Eternal World? What is the conscience of man that makes him a law to himself, but a certain light of justice imprinted on his soul by the Eternal Word? What is the deepest craving of every human soul but the deliverance from evil and the coming of good? It is impossible for a man not to

wish this deliverance from evil, this ascent to the greatest good, however he may mistake that good. Hence men have always sought this deliverance, even when they knew not who should deliver them. The Word of God was nigh to them, even at their doors, yet so secretly that they knew it not, when they condemned their own evils, felt their own miseries, and cried to God for deliverance.

The Word of God is the Wisdom of God, and under this name His presence and His action in the world is thus described in the Book of Wisdom: "Wisdom is more active than all active things: and reacheth everywhere by reason of her purity. . . . . For she is the brightness of eternal light, and the unspotted mirror of His Majesty, and the image of His goodness, and being but one, she can do all things: and remaining in herself the same, she reneweth all things, and through nations conveyeth herself into holy souls, and maketh friends of God and prophets. . . . . She reacheth therefore from end to end mightily, and disposeth all things sweetly. . . . . For it is she that teacheth the knowledge of God, and is a chooser of His works."

Not only secretly but manifestly, the Word of God rehearsed His own Incarnation, in open visions taking a human form, and in spoken words, and in inspirations as of man to man, conveying the light of His presence and His gracious help "through nations into holy souls." The Gentile Job proclaimed to the Gentiles that he knew that his Redeemer liveth. The Gentile Balaam prophesied His coming, despite of his own will. Plato, whom a Father has called the Greek edition of Moses, declared that until a Divine One came to teach us, we knew not what to ask of God. The Sibyls prophesied of Christ, and Virgil versified their prophecies. Where was the nation before the Incarnation that felt not the deep conviction that they needed a deliverer who should be both human and divine? Their greatest errors were but the corruption of this truth. They sought him in some wise king whom they deified; or in some sage in whom they fancied that divinity inhabited; or in the founders of their religious systems whom they considered to have been divinely inspired; or they sought this deliverer in their secret initiations; or in their very gods, whom they first imagined, then humanized, and then looked to as deliverers from evil. The instinct of the Incarnation was everywhere; and everywhere they looked, to heaven and to earth,

for some god in the form of man, or for some man into whom a god had descended, to deliver them from evil, and to bring them light and good. For in their blindness they knew not that the very Word of God who gave them their reason and their conscience, was to become incarnate for their deliverance. Yet the nations desired their deliverer, even when they knew not whom they desired. They had a sense of the true God as above all their gods, to whom, as Tertullian observes, they cried in the hour of distress, forgetting their own gods. And in view of this universal desire for a divine deliverer, many Fathers have not hesitated to say, that even among the Gentiles the sincere worshippers of God were saved through implicit belief in the Incarnation. Hence the remarkable words of Aggeas the prophet, that "the desired of all nations shall come." "He said not that he was the desirable, but the desired of all nations," observes Richard of St. Victor, "from which we may understand that in every nation there were some inflamed with this desire; and that His coming was foreknown and expected by many Gentiles."* St. Paul, therefore, calls Christ "the Saviour of all men, but especially of the faithful."

That Eternal Word that was everywhere operating in the world, entered at the appointed time into a body undefiled. "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Estranged from God we could not come to the light; but the light came to us. We could not ascend to God; but God descended to us. Immersed in carnal things, and absorbed in the love of this world, we had neither an eye nor a taste for spiritual things; and He came in a body and soul like ours, that by tempering His presence to our carnalized condition, He might accustom us by degrees to His divine light, and drawing us to His spirit by degrees, might heal us in the end. "Because of our infirmity," says St. Leo, "He diminished Himself; because we were incapable of beholding Him, He covered the splendour of His majesty with the veil of His body, that the eyes of men might look upon Him."† We had lost our sympathy with God in our fears of His justice; but the Son of God drew our love to Him with all the tenderness of His human sympathy, fulfilling the words of the Prophet Osee: "I will draw them with the cords of

* Ricardus de S. Victore, *De Verb. Incarnat.* c. viii.

† St. Leo, *Serm.* 25 *in Nativitate Domini.*

Adam, with the bands of love." We have received nothing with our nature from the first father of our race but sin and calamity. But the Son of God is made man, and becomes a better father of our humanity. As the head and inexhaustible fountain, not of our carnal but of our spiritual generation, we recover from Him the justice of God, and the peace we had lost.

In our calamitous condition we had sunk down from the divine light into our folly, had lost the justice of God, had forfeited our salvation, and had no help in ourselves to recover our final end. But God would not have the whole creation to fail through the failure of the intelligent part of that creation. He would not give to evil the triumph of success over good. He would not allow His favourite creature, whom He had made in His image, to perish utterly. He would not have His great design of giving Himself for the final happiness of man to be defeated. He, therefore, gave the Person of His own Eternal Son to a man created by the Holy Spirit pure and undefiled from an Immaculate Virgin, and so descended from the stock of Adam, and united our human nature by an indissoluble bond with His Eternal Word. In Christ Jesus "the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily;" and He "is made of God unto us wisdom, and justice, and sanctification, and redemption." A new fountain of light and life is opened to us, and that fountain placed in human nature is divine. It is divine that it may be all-powerful; it is placed in human nature that we may have free access to this divine fountain of life. Contracted within the circle of human nature since our fall, and reluctant through our moral infirmity to pass beyond the boundaries of our nature; the health that we had lost, the life that we stood in need of, was brought down into our human nature, and placed on our level, that we might first find God anew in our own nature, and then ascend through His humanity to His divinity.

Our disease was pride, and for our cure God comes to us in humility. Our disease was sensuality, and we see God suffering in a body like our own, and giving us the law of self-denial for our cure in His own example. Our disease was the wisdom of the flesh, conquering the mind with its turbulent assumptions, and we see the Eternal Wisdom crucifying His flesh with His spirit, and proclaiming the wisdom of the flesh to be folly. Our disease was the ambition of this world, and we see, to our confusion, in the divine example, that power is perfected for our human nature in

infirmity. Our disease was to love the wealth of this world as our final good, and we see the inexhaustible wealth of God dwelling in poverty. A new and a supernatural providence has come to us in the person of our Lord Jesus Christ, a providence that is perfect in wisdom, visible in example, and audible in precept. With over-abounding goodness and unspeakable mercy, the Divine Physician has brought us every medicine of which our sick nature stood in need; has shown us the way from disease to health, and from death to life; and has provided the remedies for every disorder of our mind and heart, and is Himself the fountain of our light and life.

We are so made that we would not change our identity of nature with an angel or with any being however noble, for that would be to destroy our own. What we really wish is to have our own nature rectified, purified, enlightened, enlarged, exalted to greater good, and beatified. "We also," says St. Paul, "who are in this tabernacle, do groan, being burdened: because we would not be unclothed, but clothed upon, that that which is mortal may be swallowed up by life." This terrible dread of death, although the way to life; this fear of the breaking up of the mould and form of the old Adam, before we can receive an immortal form, is the last of the fears inspired by the anticipation of breaking away from our present contractions and limitations; and yet they must be broken, like the shell to let free the winged bird, before we can reach the atmosphere of perfect freedom. For the children of Adam must break through many limitations before they reach this perfect freedom. What is contrition but the breaking up of sin to receive the form of justice? What is penance but the breaking down of old habits to receive the new? What is obedience but the breaking down of pride to receive the will of God? What is self-denial but the breaking up of concupiscence to receive the modest habit of sobriety? What is conversion but the breaking down of self-love to receive the love of God? What is contemplation but the breaking forth from the natural limits of our mind to enter into the superior light and truth of God. But Christ has given us both the example and the power of dying to ourselves that we may live to God, until death can no more alarm us, because we are disposed to eternal life by the life of Christ within us.

We will now sum up this lecture in a very brief form, and chiefly

in the words of St. Bernard. The true progress of man from his feeble beginning to his final end, is marked out by Divine Providence, and the path of that progress is strewn with greater and still greater benefits as we walk faithfully along its course. But the whole of this progress is marked by a succession of liberations, liberations from ignorance, liberations from earthliness, and liberations from many kinds of limitation. This progress has its concentrated expression in the moral and supernatural advancement of the will. Before we reach our final end we require a threefold freedom, freedom from necessity, freedom from sin, and freedom from suffering. Freedom from necessity is given to our will in our creation; the grace of Christ restores us to freedom from sin; but freedom from suffering is reserved until we reach our final end in God. The first of these liberties is of nature, the second is of grace, the third is of glory. For man is created with a free will that he may become a noble creature in God; he is reformed from injustice to innocence that he may become a new creature in Christ; he is raised to glory after the new creature has been perfected in the Spirit of God. The first of these liberties hath much honour, but the second hath much virtue, and the third hath the accumulation of joy.

If it be said, as certain heresies have dared to say, that the grace of Christ compels our will, and saves against our will by destroying our liberty, how can this be, since Christ, who is the author of grace, has said: "If the Son shall set you free, then shall you be truly free." The predestination of God to salvation is the preparation of those graces which make our salvation sure. God knows whom He will save. What, then, does free will do? I answer briefly, says Bernard—it is saved. Take away free will and there is nothing to be saved. Take away grace, and there is nothing by which we can be saved. The work of salvation cannot be accomplished without two things—that by which it is done, and that to which, or in which, it is done. God is the author of salvation: free will is capable of salvation. That, therefore, which can only be given by God, and only accepted by free will, can neither be without the consent of the receiver nor without the grace of the Giver. Thus free will is said to co-operate with the grace that gives salvation, when it consents, that is, when it is saved; for to consent is to be saved.

With infants a different dispensation provides for a different condition. Their sin is without their will, because they have not reached the age of reason, and their will is not yet free. They have not consented to the alienation of their will from God. They are therefore saved by the regeneration of Christ, without their will, because as yet they have no free or responsible will. But where the will is free it must freely co-operate with the grace of Christ. Why has He given us a law of salvation, if we are not free to obey His law? Why has He commanded the virtues, and given us grace for them, if we are not free to exercise the Christian virtues? Why does He command us to believe, and impose fearful penalties on unbelief, if we are not free to believe? Why does He command us to love God with all our heart and strength, if we have no heart, no strength of will with which to love God? He strengthens our heart and will that we may love God. We have an appetite, in common with the animal creation, and St. Paul calls it "the wisdom of the flesh;" of which he says, that "it is not subject to the will of God, nor can it be." Having this appetite in common with the animals, what distinguishes us from them but our free will? It is a habit of the soul free to dispose of herself. It is not compelled, it is not extorted; it is will, not necessity, or man would cease to be man. What is compelled is not will, it is violence; but where there is consent there is will, and where there is will there is liberty. The liberty of our nature exalts us above the animal creation; the liberty of grace exalts us above the world and the flesh; the liberty of glory puts death beneath our feet. For by the victory over sin, and the triumph over death, which is the last enemy to be destroyed, we are transferred to the liberty of the glory of the sons of God, with that freedom with which Christ has made us free.*

* See St. Bernard, *De Gratia et Libero Arbitrio*, c. 1-3

LECTURE V.

SELF AND CONSCIENCE.

"My conscience bearing me witness."—ROMANS ix. 1.

OF all the mysteries of human nature this is the most strange that man should not only be ignorant of himself, but that he should not care to know himself. If he neither loved himself nor took any interest in himself, his indifference about the knowledge of himself would be intelligible; but this is what is so mysterious in human nature, that the more a man loves himself the less he cares to know himself. Yet with respect to all persons and things except ourself, the more we love them, the more we delight to know and understand them, that we may constantly strengthen our affection with fresh discoveries and new motives. But we still everywhere meet with this singular exception, that self-love has no zeal for self-knowledge.

Why does our zeal for ourselves awaken so much of our love and so little of our understanding? The very question brings a smile upon the face, and in that smile there is a silent irony that penetrates to the malady from which this contradiction springs. For what we are slow to see in ourselves we are quick to see in others, and could we but see ourselves through their eyes, and with their independent judgment, we should hasten, with the confusion of shame, to rectify the failings which others see in us though we do not. So different is the image we frame in our imagination of what we are, from our real presentation as seen by other eyes. But unhappily self-love is the most jealous, sensitive, and vindictive of all feelings; and our best friends and most devoted superiors, to whose wisdom and prudence we readily intrust our other interests, are apt to offend and lose their influence with us,

when they make the hazardous attempt to give us some knowledge of ourselves.

The conclusion is obvious. There must be some grave disorder in the conditions of a love that shrinks from knowing the subject of that love. Something in our nature must be off its balance, and there must be a vital error somewhere causing us to wrap our self-love in self-ignorance. For we have the ominous instinct and apprehension that a better knowledge of one's self would bring pain with it, and shame to our self-love, and a demand for its sacrifice that we are unwilling to make. The chief obstacle to self-knowledge, therefore, is this very self-love, which stands self-condemned in the very act of resisting knowledge. Yet all love of one's self is not thus condemned, as we shall afterwards see; for there is a love of self that seeks, in all humility, the true knowledge of one's self and of what we stand in need. We are only speaking here of that vicious self-love which is the great deformity of the soul.

It must, however, be admitted, that even they who sincerely seek to know themselves, find it no short or easy task. As we have no direct view of our own features, but can only see them as reflected in a mirror, so we have no direct view of our own soul, but can only see her as she is reflected in her operations. Our mental eye is, in this respect, like our corporal eyes; being the foremost faculty of the soul it cannot see what is behind it, unless in some reflecting medium brought before the mind. As our features are no direct object to our eyes, our soul is no direct object to our mind. No subject is its own object, but is made for something greater and better, and that something better is its object. Had we been made for ourselves we should, doubtlessly, have been so made as to have the direct view of ourselves; but this is a decisive proof that we are not made for ourselves, that we have not this direct and objective perception of ourselves.

The glass in which we see ourselves is no part of us, it is something quite distinct from us, and there we see ourselves by reflection. The light in which we see our soul is not only something different from what we are, but is something greater than what we are, in which we see ourself reflected. What is the knowledge of one's self but the true and just perception of our own measures and manners? But this requires a true and just standard of measurement. How can we see what

we are unless we can see what we are not, and what we ought to be? How can we see our defects from order except in a law of perfect order? How can we see our deformity except in a light of perfect beauty? "If the soul has not got a mirror," says St. Bernard, "she cannot know herself; the pure and spotless mirror of the soul is the conscience."* In the conscience is the light and law of God, and the whole order of moral beauty; and, unless the eye is vitiated with self-love or defiled with sensuality, when we view ourselves reflected in that mirror we are able to see ourselves and take the measure of what we are.

Whilst men are keen upon their interests, their mental pursuits or pleasures, these various occupations sharpen their faculties, but increase the difficulties of self-knowledge. For much of the charm of these pursuits consists in taking the man away from himself, and in causing him to forget himself. When he is absorbed in business, study, or pleasure, the man is said to be *preoccupied*, an expressive term which indicates that he is drawn out of himself, and set on the things before him. How can we reconcile this love of pursuits external to the man with a predominant love of self? The fact is, that self-love finds its nourishment in those very things that are outside the man, and that take him from himself. This, however, requires explanation.

If man were his own good, the knowledge and love of himself would be the sources of his happiness. In that case solitude would not be his trial but his delight, for the more he were alone with himself, the more he would enjoy himself. What greater proof can there be that man is not his own good, than his fear of solitude? Why has he such a dread of solitude? Why does he think a solitary life unnatural? Why has he such a horror of having nothing but himself to think of, and to live upon? To the ungodly man the most terrible of punishments is to be shut up in a lonely cell, and to be thrown upon himself as his one and only resource. When placed in unbroken seclusion, unless he be a holy man, who lives in converse with God and with the spirits of the just made perfect, the only question that remains is, how long can he go on before he breaks down, not merely in health, but in mind, and becomes an utter wreck. So true is it that man was not made for himself.

* S. Bernard, *De Interiori Domo*, c. xxiii.

The man who lives with God is never alone. Nay, he is never less alone than when alone. The things of time are of small importance to him in comparison with the things of eternity. The realms of eternal truth are open to his mind; God, and His Christ, and the populated heavens are open and accessible to his heart. He is never without resources that are incomparably greater than himself. But to the man who loves nothing greater than himself, to dwell alone with himself is wearisome, and with time intolerable. How, then, is this disgust and wearisomeness with self to be reconciled with all this love of self?

The fact is that no man really loves himself alone, and as the one immediate object of his love. He loves himself in a roundabout way, through many things that he associates with himself, and in which he reflects himself. By associations and by an imaginative appropriation, the actual self grows into many things by reflecting one's self into them, which creates a fictitious and imaginary self that is not the real self. We may compare this complex image of self with its grotesque exaggeration to those spectral images which the traveller sees of himself, when, with his back to the sun, and the mists on the mountains before him, he finds his figure reflected before his eyes in gigantic and misshapen proportions. Take away his surroundings, strip his associations from him, and you reduce him to himself. Put him into solitude, or bring him to his deathbed, and what he is not drops from what he is, and he finds his veritable self. He finds himself face to face with his conscience, the witness not only of what he is, but of what he ought to be.

When a man comes to his pure self, and when that self is felt without anything intervening, neither the sense of God, nor the sense of other creatures, nor even their images as distractions from one's self; the taste of self is not pleasant. It is a voidness and want, and has a flavour of repulsive bitterness, which led St. Paul to say, "we have in us an answer of death, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God who raiseth up the dead." For though there is a certain life in our nature, it is not the true life for which we were made, and which we receive from God. When we look to ourselves for good, we find but the capacity for good; and when we desert our true good we find ourselves empty and void. When we look to our earthly associations for satisfying good to justify our self-love, we find but disappoint-

ment, because our true good is not less but greater than ourselves.

This is terribly exemplified, and may be taken as a test trial, in the so-called philosophical school of German pessimists. Rejecting God from themselves and from their minds, rejecting Him as their Creator, Provider and final end, and looking to themselves for a divinity in their own will, they have proclaimed their sad experience that they find their human life to be a dreary waste and hopeless misery. They have, therefore, raised the question whether life is worth living? Such is the life they have made for themselves, and such is the life they find in themselves.

When a man can escape from its solitary nature by no other door, he will take refuge in his imagination. There he will paint scenes of life, society, and indulgence into which he may throw his feelings, and exercise his self-love at will. But if the burden of himself is too heavy for his fancy to relieve he broods on imaginary evils, which still foster his self-love, and sinks into melancholy. Melancholy may be truly called the black bile of self-love; it is a state in which the soul is overshadowed and depressed with the sense of her own insufficiency, whilst unwilling to rise up to better and more generous things. The melancholy soul sits in the pool of her despondency, and pines beneath the gloomy shadow of herself which overhangs her like a cloud. The sentiment of melancholy works like a spell of enchantment to sadden the soul with imagined afflictions, from which self-love fails not to extract a noxious nourishment, that swells the soul with the conceit of worth overwhelmed by evil powers. But let the hour of real affliction come and it will break the enchantment of self-love, and destroy the pride of imaginary distress. And if, in this hour of visitation, the soul turns to God, and the severity of conscience brings her to the severity of repentance, when she enters into the mercy of God she will no longer fear to be alone with God.

The deeply-seated evils that cause God to be forgotten, demand sharp and cutting remedies. When God sends them, in His mercy, they not unfrequently come with a shock that lays open the whole interior condition of the soul, like a flash of light through the darkness of the night, giving a great self knowledge, with complete conversion. The Divine light pierces the depth of the soul, the conscience inflicts its pangs, the treacherous foundation on which self-love has rested the soul is exposed to view; and it becomes

equally visible that God alone is the solid firmament on which she can build securely. There are other souls, on the contrary, and these are numerous, who have no great depth of malignity nor yet of goodness, who take things easily because they are never greatly troubled. With a half-and-half allegiance to God, and a half devotion to themselves, somewhat spiritual and a good deal sensual, they keep their inconstant souls in a state of vacillation, move to and fro like a pendulum much on the same line of motion, but never get down into that profundity of humility which ensures the real knowledge of ourselves.

What is that self of which so much is said and so little known? Self is the subjective man in that nature with which he was born into this world. Self is man's nature as taken apart from all that God does for him, and from all that God provides for him. Self is our own individual personality as denuded of all that is not ourself, as stripped of all that we receive, and of all with which we are clothed, whether in soul or body, through the good provision of God, be it light, truth, grace, nurture, or any good whatsoever to mind, soul, or body, that God has given us. St. Paul brings us to ourself when he asks the question: "What hast thou that thou hast not received? And if thou hast received, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received?" Again, he says to the man of faith: "You were darkness, but now light in the Lord." Your nature is dark; God has given you light. Your sin made your nature darker; God has given you greater light to expel the darkness of sin.

"Have you evil in you?" asks St. Augustine, "That is from yourself. Have you good in you? That is from God. You have turned from yourself to God, and by this conversion you have become light. How were you made light? God is light. You were not light, but sinful. The old man was darkness. If you are now light, another has given you light. Do not imagine that you are light, for that is the true light which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. When you were turned from God by your evil will, you were darkness; you are now light, not light in yourself, but light in the Lord. What have you that you have not received?"* What is true of your light is equally true of every good that you have received, whether for body or soul. But as to yourself, the prophet Isaias will tell you what you

* S. August. *Enarrat. in Psalm.* xxv.

are: "Behold, you are from nothing, and your work from that which hath no being." But that we may know from whom we receive the better things, the prophet introduces the Almighty, saying: "I am the Lord thy God, who take thee by the hand, and say to the: Fear not, I have helped thee."

God makes our nature, but our own will makes our character. As the principle of human activity our will is the creation of God, but the use of its power is our own. The conduct of the will is the conduct of the man; the conduct of the man forms the habits of the man, and the habits of the man constitute his character. The whole moral man is reducible, therefore, to the conduct of his will. But the will of man is one thing, and the objects on which he employs his will are another. In vain would be his will unless God gave objects to his will to bring its power into exercise. As his own nature is the creation of God, so whatever his will is employed upon is either God, or the creation of God, or the gift of God. What has he, then, that he has not received? Or in what can he glory as though he had not received? What attracts his will, that he loves; what repels his will, that he disrelishes or hates. "My love," says St. Augustine, "is the weight that inclines me, and to what my love inclines me to that I am carried." What we chiefly love to that we mainly cleave, and we take from it the colour, sentiment and character which saturate our life. If our dominant love is to this world, our love carries us into the world. If our dominant love is to God, our love carries us to God. If our dominant love is to ourself, we are not carried to self, because there we are, and there our will is; but the will draws all things to self, and through the magical delusion of imagination, out of all we draw to ourself we construct a fictitious self, and on that fiction we expend our love. For this self-love builds in delusion, the delusion entertains the will, and the will is thus kept from seeking solid good, whilst building delusion in its place. For what we will, that we love, and what we love, that we are, as we become changed into the qualities of what we love.

This, then, is the just measure of ourself. Our own substance is as nothing, because being is good, and good is being, but our good is not in ourself but in another, since we are but the recipients of good. We are only good in proportion as our will cleaves to a greater good, which is not ourself. God is our substantial

good, and therefore the Psalmist says to God: "my substance is as nothing before Thee." In loving one's self rather than God, we turn from light to darkness; but, as being is relative to light, in diminishing our light we diminish ourselves. Listen to this profound truth as explained by St. Augustine: "To be is to belong to light; not to be is to belong to darkness. Whoever, therefore, deserts his Creator, inclines to that nothingness out of which he was created, and by this very sin he is darkened. Yet he is not so darkened as utterly to perish, but he descends to things that are low and vile."*

What is *content* but the fulness of our capacity for containing? If man were his own object, and an object sufficient for himself, he ought to be always full, always content. Why, then, is he always in want of greater light? Why is he in such need of so many things? Why has he such great desires and such little content? What signify those sighs and yearnings for something better than he is? Why those incessant wanderings abroad of his mind and heart in search of what he cannot find at home? The natural man has not that far insight into all he wants that is open to the man of faith, but even the natural man, when he examines himself, sees clearly that he is insufficient for his own content. Let us hear this natural man. Plato says, that "all sin comes from too much self-love."† Cicero observes, that "Nature loves nothing solitary, but always clings to something else for support."‡ Seneca perceives that "though man is born for virtue, he is not born with virtue;"§ and he exclaims: "Oh, how contemptible a thing is man, except when he rises above human things."‖ Sentences like these sound like distant echoes from the inspired Psalmist, contemplating man in the light of God. "Behold thou hast made my days measurable (or, as in the Hebrew text, but a handsbreadth), and my substance is as nothing before Thee. And indeed, all things are vanity; every man living. Surely man passeth as an image; yea, and he is disquieted in vain. He storeth up, and he knoweth not for whom he shall gather these things. And now, what is my hope? Is it not the Lord? And my substance is with Thee."

If the pride that breaks out of self-love into conscious egotism

* S. August. *Enarrat. in Psalm.* vii. † Plato, *De Legibus*, L. 5, c. 4.
‡ Cicero, *De Amicitia.* § Seneca, *Epist.* 90.
‖ Id. *Præfat. in L.* 1. *Quest.*

could make a man sufficient for himself, it would necessarily follow that the higher a man ascends in pitch of pride the more he will be sufficient for himself. Let us put this to a simple test intelligible to all men. Who knows not that the proudest are the shallowest of men? Who, in his sober senses, fails to see that the operation of self-sufficiency is an assumption that reveals the hollow condition of the soul? If it were not the most painful it would be the most ridiculous of human exhibitions. Offensive when displayed in arrogance to men, it is revolting when displayed in impiety towards God. But as the operation of man's self-sufficiency—however smooth the words, however philosophical the terms, however ostensible the argument—is reducible to nothing but boasting, from beginning to end it is simply ridiculous.

The more pride a man reveals, the more evident to all beholders becomes the absence of mental and moral solidity. Great pride, in the judgment of sober men, is nearly allied to mental derangement; and it is no uncommon thing for it to break out into open madness, as our lunatic asylums too often bear witness. For excessive pride is a kind of intoxication that terribly strains the powers of Nature, as it works with violence against the just order of Nature, and therefore against its tranquillity. And when men, in the humour of false philosophy, abstract their minds from God, and attempt to construct the subjective man into a self-sufficing being, they little understand the desolating effects of their reveries upon the minds of weak men, already too apt to assert their self-sufficiency.

Let us now apply our test. Pride is a swelling of the soul that springs from the perverse appetite of making ourselves greater than, in truth, we are. To take the strictly scientific definition of St. Thomas: "Pride is that whereby a man desires to surpass the measure of his condition in contradiction to right reason."* This elation of pride springs from self-love, and is the chief outcome of self-love. But if man were made for himself, he must be sufficient for himself, which is contradicted by all the facts of his nature. Again, if he were made for himself, he must have made himself, which is absurd. If he were sufficient for himself he must be as a god to himself, an absurdity which more than one modern school of infidels has maintained with the very lunacy of pride.

* S. Thomas, *Sum.* 2. 2. q. 162. a. 1.

For if these absurdities could be true and reconcilable, there would be no inordinate self-love, and, consequently, no pride. Yet all men admit that pride, the offspring of inordinate self-love, is the root of human evil; and it is recognised as the offensive presumption of a self-sufficiency that we do not possess, and that is repugnant to reason, justice, and common sense. Man is therefore altogether insufficient for himself, and the contrary assumption is absurd and ridiculous. So far from being independent, as self-sufficiency would make him, the number and greatness of his wants proclaim him the most dependent of all beings.

If human nature finds itself in a state of disorder from its birth; if man comes into the world in need of reparation; if his faculties are wounded and weak; if evil is present with him, and he suffers and sighs for a good that is far from him, it is because he is of the race that was incorporated bodily in Adam when he fell off from God, who is the good of his soul, and fell upon himself, thus substituting the love of self as his dominant disposition for the love of that good for which his soul was made. But this is to lose the whole order of good, and consequently to lose the justice which acts upon that order.

The alienation from God, which constitutes the original culpability of man, has these two calamitous effects: the one is the forfeiture of that supernatural principle of grace which enabled him to advance towards his Supreme Good; the other is the contraction of the man, through this inversion of his affections upon himself, which is the cause of all his miseries. But God cannot give up his rights in a creature made for Himself and bearing His image. Nor can that creature be happy or content without God. In his body, derived from Adam, there reigns a propensity, a disorder, a concupiscence, a fuel of sin that oppresses, obscures, and defiles the soul from the moment that, fresh from the creative hand of God, she enters into the body, there to dwell with it in the closest union of life and action. Such is the fallen condition of man, from which he can only be delivered through the unspeakable mercy of God, in the regeneration of Christ by the sacrament of baptism.

But after the soul is regenerated the body still remains unregenerated until its death and resurrection. Left in its mortality, the fuel of concupiscence is continually supplied from the external world through the corporeal appetites and senses; these, again,

feed the internal senses, and stimulate the subtle and ever-active imagination. All this fuel of concupiscence fosters and promotes the carnal consciousness of self, and stimulates to the inordinate love of self against the laws of God, written with light in the conscience. "For the corruptible body is a load upon the soul, and the earthly habitation presseth down the mind that museth upon many things." The unregenerated body has, therefore, to be incessantly combated by the regenerated soul, lest she lose her freedom, and turn more disastrously than ever from her communion with God. For, as St. Paul says: "There dwelleth not in me, that is in my flesh, that which is good. For the wisdom of the flesh is death: but the wisdom of the Spirit is life and peace. Because the wisdom of the flesh is an enemy to God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither can it be. And they who are in the flesh cannot please God." That is, they who live in the desires of the body cannot please God, because these desires bring the soul under bondage to the inferior nature, and her love is turned from God to self.

From this comes the necessity of the law of self-denial. This law was introduced with the promise of redemption; was emphatically re-asserted in the word and example of our Divine Redeemer Himself, and the Cross is its everlasting symbol. Tertullian has justly observed that the law of self-denial is the special law of Christians. It is directly opposed to self-love, and to whatever feeds and stimulates self-love. The highest reason of the law of self-denial is summed up by the Venerable Bede in this short sentence: "We can only approach to the God who is above us by quitting ourselves, and this is called the denial of ourselves." That man effectually denies himself who subjects his body to his soul, and his soul to God.

Our inordinate love of the things of this present life has its chief foundation in this love of ourselves. We draw them to us; we reflect ourselves in them; and out of them we build that constructive and fictitious self of which we have spoken. Upon this fictitious self we expend our affections; they absorb the energies of the soul in vain, and withhold us from ascending to the better things. Self-love must therefore be dissolved into the love of God, a commutation of its force which can only be accomplished by the addition of Divine grace, and a change in its direction. To quote the luminous words of St. Augustine: "The soul is carried

to whatever she is carried by the weight of her love; and for this reason we are commanded to carry over the weight of cupidity to the weight of charity, until cupidity is consumed and charity is perfected."* This transfer of love from self to God is the whole sum of Christian perfection, the sublime height of which, familiar to the Saints, is thus described by the same great Doctor and Saint: "God is to be loved until, if it were possible, we might forget ourselves."†

This self-denial is the expression of that self-hatred which is the adversary of self-love. Not that we are to hate ourselves with an evil will, but to sacrifice our self-love from the truest charity to ourselves, that we may gain the love of God, and, in the love of God, our union with the supreme good of our life. This hatred, therefore, is but the earnest love of God resisting self-love as its enemy. On this subject Tertullian says, with his usual precision and profundity, that among Christians the love of self is not so great a thing as the hatred of self. And this profound truth has obtained its ample exposition in St. Augustine's famous book *On the City of God*, where he describes the two loves that have built two cities, which, in this world, are mingled together, but in the next are parted from each other. One of these cities is ruled by God, the other by Satan. The City of God begins from the love of God, and is constructed with the love of God, and the energy of that Divine love increases, even to the hatred of self. But the City of Satan begins from self-love and grows with the love of self, and that self-love increases even to the hatred of God. These two loves embrace the whole history of the human race, and extend to the eternal years; the one is holy, the other is unclean; the one is social, the other is private. Our Lord has therefore said: "He who loveth his soul shall lose it, and he who hateth his soul in this world, shall keep it in eternal life."

Is there no love of one's self, then, which is good and lawful? Undoubtedly there is. How else could we have been taught to love our neighbour as we love ourself? How else could we have the virtue of hope? How, again, the love of our salvation and perfection? What is love but the desire of uniting our being with a more excellent Being, that may give us the good and perfection that we want? Our good, as we have so often repeated,

* S. August. *Epist.* 89 *ad Hilarium.*
† Id. *Serm.* 54, *De Verbis Domini.*

is neither in ourself or of ourself: our good is in God and of God. We therefore look to our real interests, and exercise a holy love of ourselves, when we look to God above all things, and love Him with our whole heart and mind; and when we love our neighbour for His sake as we love ourselves, that is, when we wish him the same good that we wish ourselves. When this greatest interest of our love is made firm and secure to us, it becomes the vital principle by which all subordinate interests and affections are regulated.

This is not a self-love, with self for its direct object, but it is a love of ourself in our objective good, in that supreme good that makes us good according to the essential nature and order of good. The love of charity is expansive, it extends in all directions; while that pestilent self-love contracts and oppresses the soul, withholds her from charity, and eats into her spiritual nature like rust or rot, penetrating into her very substance with a vehemence and passion that works unlimited evils. There is no evil of which it is not capable; the least thing gives occasion to it; and without a renunciation of that self-love which refuses the love of God, and a profound humility to protect this renunciation, it is very difficult, if not impossible, to protect ourselves against it.

As the true love of ourselves is included in the love of God, we have no special command to love ourselves. Charity is the concord of all things. It is a virtue so divine, so ample, so all-embracing, that it extends our love of God to all that God loves. Charity is the principle that animates and regulates the love of one's self and of one's neighbour within the love of God; whosoever loves himself otherwise more truly hates than loves himself, because he loves the worse instead of the better, which is beyond all reason and equity. It is beyond all reason, because reason demands that we should love that which is best in itself and best for us; and it is beyond all equity, because equity is the equalization of our will with the just order and due proportion of things, whilst inequity, or iniquity, is the failure of our will from the due order and just proportion of things. Hence, the Scripture says: "He who loveth iniquity, hateth his own soul." These words of St. Augustine are also to the point: "In what inexplicable way it comes about I do not know, but whoever loves himself without loving God, does not love himself; and whoever loves himself does not love himself."* If this sounds like a paradox to those who love them-

* S. August. *Tract.* cxxiii. *in Joannem.*

selves without loving God, it is a clear and luminous truth to those who love themselves within the love of God.

Face to face with ourself is our conscience. We call it ours because it is implanted in our faculties, but conscience is the organ of God, and the expression of His will to us. Implanted in our mind and heart, and put into the closest relations with our spiritual sense, conscience is at once a light, a sense, and a witness to our will. We see the law of right and wrong in its light, we feel its force, we remember what it records as though it were written in a book within us. Compared with every other kind of knowledge, conscience has this distinctive character, that it is the witness of God and the soul. This mysterious element in the reason of man reflects the intimate relations which God holds with his soul, and it imprints upon his heart the imperishable obligations that he owes to the Divine Author of all things. Conscience is a universal fact in human nature, and a kind of natural revelation, giving to all men and to each, in a more or less vivid way, a notion of the law and of the end of human life. It is to be found, with more or less obscuration, in the savage as well as in the philosopher. Plato proclaims that this unwritten law and notion of good which the philosophers, poets, and legislators contemplate, is inseparable from God and from a Divine providence.* Cicero and Seneca use the word conscience as synonymous with religion, but, owing to the unregenerated state of the pagans and their heathen blindness, their conscience was much more sensitive to the dread of the Divine anger than to the sense of the Divine goodness.

Faith, and the charity which follows faith, give perfection to the conscience, and reveal to our understanding what conscience is with great clearness. If it be, as it is, a truth and a law planted by God in our mind, it also works as a prompt and practical sense in the heart, warning us, at every instant, both what to do and what to avoid. Hence the Scriptures, both Old and New, make the heart the seat of the conscience. To return to the heart, in Scripture phrase, is to return to the conscience, to listen to the voice of God within us. The conscience not only expresses the law of God, but it necessarily implies an inward sense of God's all-seeing presence. But when we call the heart the seat of the conscience, we do not speak of the

* Plato, *De Legibus*, l. 1, c. 10.

material heart, but of the spiritual sense which is inseparable from the will, and of which the material heart is the organ. The heart is equally placed for the will, the spiritual sense and the conscience, thus intimating that the conscience, as the law of the will, is placed in the closest relations with the will. St. Paul says of the natural conscience: "The Gentiles, who have not the law, do, by nature, the things that are of the law; these having not the law, are a law to themselves: who shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience accusing or else defending them." Here, as elsewhere, the Apostle exhibits self and conscience not only as distinct each from the other, but as opposed each to the other.

As the Christian conscience is formed of the light of faith as well as of the light of reason; as it is raised to higher, more ample and diviner views of God's eternal law, and receives a keener sense of God's presence; and as it is invigorated with the force of grace and charity, making the soul much more sensible both to good and evil; the Christian conscience rises to an incredibly higher power than the natural conscience. For not only are God and the law of God seen in the truly Christian conscience with greater clearness, but the presence of God and the force of His law are felt in the heart with greater quickness and intensity. The conscience then becomes as "a breath of the Spirit of God," in whom "we live, and move, and have our being." As the light of the Word of God, it reveals to us both God and ourselves. As a breath of the Spirit of God, moving as the life of charity within us, as by a sacred touch upon our spirit, it gives us the vital sense of God's presence with us. For all the grace of God within us goes to perfect the conscience; and as a spark of divine light and a breath of divine love, the conscience is the living bond between the Christian soul and God.

St. John Chrysostom calls the conscience "the authoritative teacher implanted in human nature."* Not that the instruction which developes our conscience is divinely implanted, but, as St. Bonaventure observes, the light of its first principles is implanted.† St. Augustine enters more deeply into the office of the conscience. He calls it "a certain noble judicial power that God has inserted in us, so that in this book of light, which

* S. J. Chrysost. *Hom.* lii. *in Genes.* c. xxvi.

† S. Bonavent. 2. *Sentent.* d. 39, a. 1. q. 2.

is truth, we distinguish light from darkness in so far as the truth is naturally impressed upon the heart of man."* Elsewhere he says: "It is no small thing that, previous to the merit of our good actions, we have received a natural judicial power, whereby we are able to prefer wisdom to error, and peace to trouble."†

Conscience is both the law and the judge of the will, and in both these offices it is the organ and representative of God. It instructs us what to desire and what to fear, what to do and what to leave undone; and then it judges what we have done; applauds what we have done well, and rebukes what we have done ill. It gives peace to the good, and terror to the evil. In a word, and that word shall be St. Bernard's: "The conscience is a mirror that reflects into the man the knowledge of his exterior and interior condition. How can the man see himself without a mirror? A good conscience is the bright and pure mirror of religion. As a woman composes herself to beauty in a glass to please her husband, the soul contemplates herself in her conscience, and there sees how far she has gone from the image of truth, and what she still retains of her Creator's image."‡

We therefore carry in our conscience, as the companion and tutor of our will, the sense of God, the voice of His law, and the mirror of our life; and our conscience is at once the witness and the judge of our conduct; the approver of our good and the punisher of our evil acts; and the faithful recorder of our just or unjust life. When this record of our life comes to an end with the termination of our mortal years, it is sealed unto the day of judgment, where God will condemn nothing that has been blotted out by the tears of repentance, or consumed in the flame of charity.

How perfectly the folded record of our conscience is preserved within us, we have it demonstrated in certain critical cases that are historical. A sudden violence to the human system, under given circumstances, has unfolded the whole volume of life to the mind and heart in every page and line of its course, and that with an instantaneous effect.

* S. August. *De Civitat. Dei.*
† Id. *De Libero Arbitrio*, l. 2, c. 20.
‡ S. Bernard, *De Interiori Domo*, c. 11.

If the conscience reveals the justice of God it is also a great revealer of His mercy; it warns us of approaching evil; it admonishes us under temptation, lest we fall; it rebukes us with severity when we have fallen, to bring us to repentance; it punishes us with trouble and distress of heart when we refuse to repent. Nothing more beautifully exhibits the paternity of God than His voice in the conscience of His children. That divine voice takes every tone that our deservings or our needs require, from the sweet and gentle accents of approval and encouragement to the stern and severe tones of rebuke and condemnation.

The pride and sensuality that blind our understanding against the truth, act also through the imagination to obscure the light of conscience. Then, instead of regulating our desires by our conscience, we are too apt to regulate our conscience by our desires, not because the true conscience can be false, but because it is masked over with false imaginations. For self-love is a great contriver in her own cause; she listens more to herself than to her conscience, and finds many pleas for her conduct which her conscience, were it listened to, would not allow. And by this folly and falsehood, to use the words of St. Paul, "the foolish heart is darkened," for pride clouds the conscience, but humility makes it clear and serene. Yet where self is not concerned, where the question is to judge some other person, the light of conscience is quickly found and as quickly applied, and is but too often taken for giving evidence as well as passing judgment.

When we speak of an evil conscience we do not mean that the conscience is evil, but that it is the witness of evil; for conscience is the light of God and the law of justice. The evil is not in our conscience but in ourself, and the conscience is the witness and judge of that evil; when, again, we speak of the worm of conscience or of the remorse of conscience, we put the cause for the effect. The conscience accuses, condemns and punishes, but the stings, pangs and bitings of conscience are the gnawing punishments of self-condemnation, suffered with fear of yet greater troubles within the heart of our evil self. For the present self-condemnation foreshadows the future judgment and the future punishment beyond the present inward confusion and disorder; and the offended conscience leaves no rest or peace to the soul, but makes her unhappy until she returns to God by repentance, after which he conscience becomes tranquil, approving and consoling.

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Should we err in reading our conscience, whether from want of light or of instruction, as even the just may do in questions remote from first principles, whilst we obey our best lights, we err without intention, and still commit no wrong, because we adhere to the great principle of obeying our conscience as far as we have its light. St. Paul, therefore, lays down the principle, that "all that is not of faith is of sin," that is, all that we believe not to be of conscience; for faith, in this place, means fidelity to conscience.

Self is the subject of conscience and the disciple of conscience. We have the inmost conviction that in listening to our conscience we hear the will of God, and that in obeying our conscience we are obedient to God. When, at the instigation of the passions of our nature, we set up our will against our conscience, we cannot resist the conviction that we are disobeying the voice of God. When, on the contrary, we make our will one with the will of God as revealed in the conscience, internal division ceases; self is no longer selfish; the whole man is at peace, and the peace and joy of a good conscience is a paradise on earth. "Our glory is this," says St. Paul, "the testimony of our conscience."

As the Eternal Word of God is the author of the natural as well as of the revealed law of justice, we must naturally expect that when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us, He would reassert the natural law and give to it new light and vigour. He did reassert that natural law, especially as contained in the ten Commandments. He constantly appealed to the law of nature in His discourses. He scattered the mists that had gathered over its sanctions through a long course of human perversity. He gave it fresh light in His parables. He appealed to the existing consciences of men; and He restored to the law of conscience its power, beauty, and serenity. He made it shine more clearly and act more forcibly through the light of faith and the discipline of the Gospel.

St. James calls the Gospel "the engrafted word, which is able to save our souls." The word of faith is engrafted in divine light upon the word of reason, and the law of Christ upon the natural conscience. To borrow a figure from St. Paul, the fertile olive, which is Christ, is grafted on the wild olive of the natural man, to make the tree of human nature spiritually rich and fertile in the fruits of light. "But the fruits of light," says St. Paul, "are in all goodness and justice and truth."

The natural conscience is, therefore, the precursor of faith, and obedience to the law of reason prepares the will to receive and obey the law of grace. The Christian faith and law are, in fact, but a higher and diviner reason, superadded to the light of Nature, which elevates the conscience to a supernatural state, and gives it a divine truth, divine motives, and a divine energy, to enlighten, lift up, and invigorate the will to desire and pursue the soul's eternal good. As the natural and the revealed laws come to us by different ways from one and the same divine source and origin, they re-unite in the Christian conscience, and there the divine law gives its brightness and perfections to the natural law, and to its observance when obeyed in Christ for God's sake. It also gives to the natural law its own supernatural motive and light, and its own title to a supernatural reward. It is therefore the most reasonable of all things to obey the law of Christ; provided we obey it in its own sense and not in ours; because Christ is the Word of truth, the Eternal Reason Incarnate, who is the fontal source of all reason whatsoever, whether natural or supernatural. For "that was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world." St. Paul therefore calls our Christian obedience our "reasonable service."

When the man is regenerated, when he receives the light of faith and the grace of charity, by their help he turns anew to God, and recovers the lost state of justice. The image of the Holy Trinity is brightened in him; the image of Christ, his Redeemer, is sealed in light upon his soul; the unction of the Holy Spirit flows to his heart; the instruction of the Church expands the light of truth implanted in his mind, and draws out the details of the divine law, whose principles are already in his conscience. As he advances in virtue, and identifies his will more and more with his conscience, his will becomes more and more luminous and more sensitive to his conscience; and in the light of his conscience he obtains a clearer revelation of his own nature, which makes him sensible that without God's help and grace he is poor, naked, blind, and miserable. There grows in him an abhorrence of sin, as it separates from God and is destructive of himself. He becomes humbled beneath the truth, which shews him things so much greater than himself, and he is ready to exclaim, with the patriarch, to God: "I am less than all Thy mercies, and the truth Thou hast fulfilled to Thy servant."

St. John Chrysostom has expressed all this in terms too clear and lucid to be here omitted. "The more," he says, "we advance in virtue, the more we reduce ourselves to nothingness. This reduction of one's self to nothingness is the highest virtue. The man of clearest sight sees the heavens at the greatest distance from him; and the more a man advances in virtue the greater is the distance that he sees between himself and God. It is no small part of Christian philosophy to know the real amount of our deservings; but we find that the man who knows himself best is he who values himself the least. Abraham and David became the most sincere with themselves after they had reached the highest point of virtue; yet Abraham declared that before God he was but dust and ashes, whilst David compared himself to the worm. Every Saint has confessed his nothingness with a like wonderful sincerity. Those persons, on the contrary, who have the least knowledge of themselves are precisely the persons who lift themselves up with arrogance. When speaking of persons infected with pride, how common it is to hear remarks like these: The man does not know himself: or, The man is completely ignorant of himself.

But when a man does not know himself, whom else does he know? Or what else does he know? If he knows himself, he knows everything. But if he knows not himself, he knows nothing to any purpose. There was a certain one who said to himself: "I will set my throne above the stars of heaven." That one was ignorant of everything. But St. Paul had no such arrogance. After his great and brilliant deeds he called himself an abortive, the least of apostles and unworthy to be called an apostle. If we wish to emulate him we must withdraw from our earthly affections, for nothing keeps us in greater ignorance of ourselves than the love of earthly things. The man who delights in the glory of this world imagines that earthly things will give him greatness; such a man may try a thousand times, and will yet fail to reach the knowledge of himself; whilst the man who despises himself obtains that knowledge with ease. And upon once knowing himself, he makes good progress in the other parts of virtue. But to obtain this beautiful knowledge he will have to stand apart, and to keep himself free from the fluctuating things that kindle such a flame in us. Then may he find out his native vileness, and exhibit that Christian humility and philosophy by

whose help we lay hold of both the present and future good, through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Truth itself is a law to our will, and equally demands our submission with the commandments. And in these days, when so many men prefer opinion to truth, because opinion does not bind them, this right of truth to the obedience of the will cannot be too much insisted upon. For no man obeys his conscience who obeys not the truth, and obeys it as it is in itself; because truth known to the mind is a part of the conscience. Truth reveals to us both our native darkness and our dependence on God for light; just as the commandments reveal to us the just order of things and our deficiencies from that order; just, also, as the grace of God reveals to us our native weakness, and makes us feel the need we have of a strength more than our own, wherewith to obey the truth and to keep the commandments. The higher the conscience is built in the truth, the fuller it is of the light of law; the more thoroughly the conscience is imbued with the grace of Christ, the more vigorously it censures the swelling movements of our selfish nature, that lift themselves against the truth and will of God, or resist His inspirations.

Such is the force of conscience, that though a thousand voices spoke in our favour, the secret voice of conscience will overbear them all. It will not be trifled with; it will stand no lying; a thousand witnesses may speak in our favour, but instead of quieting the conscience it will only awaken its more earnest rebuke. It will strike us, it will pierce us, it will suffer no false sentence to interfere with its inexorable judgment. "The sin of Juda is written with a pen of iron, with a point of a diamond, graven upon the tablet of the heart." The flatteries that contradict the conscience but provoke it to wound us with sharper stings and keener pangs of remorse. Pride may cloud and darken our mind; sensuality may blunt our sensibilities; a long neglect of God may harden us against the powers of conscience, but its light cannot be extinguished. The diamond point is there, the shock of sudden visitation may bare the soul to its light and sting once more; or, if death comes quicker than repentance, then drops the veil, then vanishes the pride, then stands the soul face to face before the conscience, with its dark record as her witness before the justice of God!

* S. J. Chrysost. *Hom.* 25 *in Matt.*

That we may better understand the power of conscience—and what man would be without its light and guidance—let us suppose it withdrawn from the human breast, and extinguished in the race of man. God shall no longer assert His justice in the soul, or inspire her with the fear of His judgments. Man is left to his unbounded self-seeking; his pride and his sensual appetites have no curb, no restraint, any longer. His imagination is let loose, without fear or restraint, upon his natural propensities and passions. There is nothing any longer left to withhold him but opinion and human law. There is nothing to curb him within. But when conscience is lost what becomes of human law? Where are its principles to be found? Where are its rights? And where its sanctions? What ground, again, is left on which to build a public opinion? When the conscience of right and wrong has taken leave of the soul of man, where can it be found in the social life of man? Where, again, must we look for the common sense of what is, or is not, becoming, which is the foundation of public opinion, since that also takes its rise from the human conscience? Even the unjust laws and unrighteous judgments of men affect to appeal to the common conscience, and to find their sanction in the light of conscience.

But we are supposing a race of men in whom the light of conscience has expired, and who are abandoned to themselves without any interior illumination from the eternal law of God. What will there be left of the constitution of man. We shall not even find that fictitious man who has been portrayed by Origen and St. Chrysostom. Even the wicked man who wears the garb of reason, like a stage costume, will not be left. Even the man who puts on God's image, like a mask, to deceive his neighbours, will be no longer found. There will be no more of those painted men put forth as real men. For when conscience is gone from mankind, hypocrisy must die out. There is no ground left to man on which to raise a moral pretension. There is not a single form of law or decency remaining out of which to make a cloak to cover evil deeds.

Let us even grant the external coercion of human laws, however impossible in the conditions of the case; yet the interior bond of conscience is dissolved; the voice of God is no longer heard within the man; the stay that upholds rather than binds the will is gone; the moral tie that holds man to God has slipped away;

nothing is left to hold man to rule but the force of that external legislation which prohibits the violation of its laws in open day, leaving free licence to secrecy and the night. The eye of human law searches nothing but public wrong; it cannot penetrate into the breast of veiled iniquity, nor reach the deeds that are committed in secret. Iniquity has only to invent certain habits and costumes to cover its deformity, and to go about in by-paths instead of breaking out in the open face of the world. What can human law deal with beyond certain outbursts against human rights and social order? It cannot visit those hidden springs in the man from which all evil issues into day. It cannot deal with the sources of corruption. It knows nothing of sin, but only of certain open acts of injustice. The cognizance of sin is the mighty work of the ever-wakeful conscience, which is seated in power close by the spring of the human will; enlightening, guiding, arguing, entreating, rebuking, encouraging; rewarding the good, and punishing the evil deed.

But were the conscience removed from its office, and its light withdrawn, the cupidities, the lusts, the self-seeking propensities of men would be like a world of prisoners let loose in the dark, each running against the other, each overthrowing the other, each in pursuit of his own licence and liberty; the whole multitude contending against each other where all are seeking one and the same thing. Thus, whilst each one sets his will and pleasure upon his own game, and is bent on satisfying his own pride, indulging his own cupidities, and satisfying his own lusts; what rivalries, what jealousies, what contentions, what shocks of destructive conflict would there be in the world, bestrewing the earth with the savage remnants of human nature, reduced to the condition of the fool who said in his heart "there is no God."*

It would be incredible, if it were not a great public fact, that this age has produced a philosophy and a widely-diffused sect, whose ambition it is to reduce the world of man to the condition above described. This impious sect has invented the theory that it is not the will but the conscience of man which leads him to error and brings him to misery. Conscience, say these enemies of God and man, is that which troubles, resists and contradicts the free instincts of man, restrains his action, afflicts him and makes him unhappy. There are two useful confessions let out in the pro-

* See Walter Montague's *Miscellanea Spiritualia*, 3rd Treatise, Sect. ii.

claiming of these propositions. The first admits that the man who separates himself from God is afflicted and unhappy ; the second confesses that he is afflicted and unhappy through the tremendous power of conscience. When neglected, the conscience may slumber, but when directly opposed by the will, it rises with terrible force to assert its authority. We hear a cry from another school of atheistic sophistry, a cry of distress, and in that cry the confession that life, to them, is nothing but bitterness and misery, for which the conscience is chiefly responsible. And so the adepts of these sects propose to root up the conscience that God has planted in man, and to substitute another conscience of human manufacture, with some kind of civil state for its authority. Philosophy, or the democratic state, or the two combined, that is to say, the opinion of the multitude combined with the authority of the multitude, is to form a new conscience for mankind after the old one has been expelled, a conscience which shall represent God no longer, but man alone, not the individual man, but the socialist, atheistical man. Self and conscience are to be one and the same ; the unenlightened instincts of the inferior man are to become the law of the whole man. The delirium of human pride can go no further.

Conscience is not from us, but from God : He holds it in His power, not we in ours. When God implants a conscience in His intelligent creature, He implants it in the very essence of the spirit, and knits it into all the powers of the soul, so that to destroy the conscience would be to destroy the immortal soul herself. If it were possible to pluck out the conscience, and to break off the dependence of our spiritual being from God, a destruction like this would be the annihilation of reason, intelligence, law, order, the sense of good and evil, and whatever distinguishes man from the beast. Chaos is empty, dark, and void, until it receives light, form and order from the Spirit of God. The Soul would be as empty, dark and void, if it had not received a spiritual light, a law, and a rule of order from the same Eternal Source. Happily, as man has not the power to destroy his soul, he has not the power to extinguish his conscience. As the expression of God's rights over man, and as the lofty guide of man to his greater good, conscience is in the keeping of God, and is safe from the destructive power of man.

The purest as well as the highest energy of the human soul is

charity, the principle of whose action God alone can give. There are loves which are follies, and they may be more truly called by grosser names. The love of God is the only power that can purify and regulate the lower affections and give to them that dignity of duty, and that innocence from harm, which make them safe and peaceful. God is the first object, and the supreme object, of the living, thinking and loving soul. Tell a man to think on nothing but himself, and you insult his reason; tell him to love nothing but himself, and you insult his conscience; tell him to live for nothing but himself, and you insult his heart, and all that is manly and generous in his nature. Man is not made for himself: his conscience knows it, his heart feels it, his mind acknowledges it even when his conduct contradicts it. If he has the least degree of humility, his soul is grateful that God has made him for what is infinitely greater than himself, whatever it costs his nature to reach his good.

St. Paul's great argument on the power of the law of Moses to awaken the knowledge of sin, is equally applicable to the law of nature in the conscience, and still more to the law of Christ. For every law of conscience is a light that gives us four revelations. First, it reveals to us the sanctity of God. Secondly, it makes known what sanctity God demands of us. Thirdly, it shows us our sinfulness in our shortcoming of the law, or our direct violation of its precepts. Fourthly, it reveals to us our native weakness, and the need we have of His help and grace, both to fulfill His law, and to reach our eternal beatitude. These four great offices are committed by God to every law that is revealed in our conscience.

Listen to the anatomizing words of St. Paul. Mark how they exhibit the darkness of self without conscience; how they display the action of the light of God within the conscience; how conscience reveals us to our self; and how self and conscience stand contrasted with each other. "Is the law sin? God forbid. But I did not know sin but by the law: for I had not known concupiscence, if the law had not said: Thou shalt not covet." Here pause. The I, or *ego*, of man is himself. He follows his concupiscence, but he does not know its destructive character; he does not know that it is opposite to the sanctity of God, and to his own sanctity, and how destructive it is of his good, until the light of the law of God in his conscience reveals

to him the evil of concupiscence, and forbids him to follow its impulsions.

Let us now follow the text. "But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead. And I lived sometime without the law, but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died: and the commandment that was ordained to life, the same was found death to me." Here pause again. In this most awful, because most truthful, exposition of the natural inward man, we find the *ego*, the I, the man's subjective will, or self, taken hold of by sin, and working all manner of evil desire, for the very reason that it is forbidden him by the law revealed in his conscience. Before he knows the law, sin is dead, because he knows not the will of God, and sin consists in disobedience to the will of God. The evil is there, but it is a blind evil, not knowing the will of Him that made us. It is evil, but it is not actual sin. But when the commandment which ordains to life becomes revealed to the will through the conscience, self-love is provoked, pride resists, concupiscence is stimulated by the prohibition that would bind its licence to oppose and disobey the law of God; and that law whose blessed office it is to enlighten the way of life, becomes, through our disobedience, the cause of death.

St. Paul continues: "Therefore the law indeed is holy, just, and good. Was that then which is good, made death to me? God forbid. But sin, that it may appear sin, by that which is good, wrought death in me: that sin by the commandment might become sinful beyond measure. For we know that the law is spiritual, but I am carnal, sold unto sin." The law is holy, just, and good, and when we compare ourselves with its light we discover the evil within us; but it also commands our obedience, and when we disobey, we sin against the light as well as against the command of our Creator, and thus, by the commandment, sin becomes sinful beyond measure. For the carnal man is weak and prone to carnal things, whilst the law is spiritual and invites to spiritual things; but when this carnal man refuses himself to the law, and delivers himself to sinful inclinations, like a man sold unto slavery, he is delivered to a tyrannical master. The Apostle is far from asserting that our nature is evil, for it is the creature of God. This was the heresy of the so-called Re-

formers. What he asserts is, that the will is too weak of itself, without the grace of God, to rise above the natural tendencies of our fallen nature, and to keep the commandments of God. "For that which I work," he goes on to say, "I understand not. For I do not that good which I will, but the evil which I hate that I do. If then I do that which I will not, I consent to the law, that is good. . . . . I find then a law, that when I have a will to do good, evil is present with me: for I am delighted with the law of God, according to the inward man: but I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind, and captivating me in the law of sin, that is in my members." The obscurity of this passage disappears when we understand that this second introduction of the word law is used ironically. The law in the members fighting against the law of the mind, and which St. Paul elsewhere calls the law of sin, is not a law in reality, but an habitual inclination of the man, which he obeys as though it were a law, and which he opposes to the law of God. The first office, therefore, which is performed by the law of God, is to humble us in the truth, and to show us how far we are from justice and from God; and this fills us with fear and humiliation. St. Augustine gives us this searching comment on the text: "How can we doubt but that the law was given that man might find himself? So long as God does not prohibit evil, man is hidden from himself; but when he receives the prohibiting law, he finds out his weakness. And when he discovers himself, he finds that he is doing evil. Whither shall he fly? Go where he will, he has himself still with him. Of what use is it, then, to try to escape that self-knowledge which is inflicted by his conscience?"*

What, then, is the remedy? St. Paul hastens to point it out. That the remedy is not in ourself is most certain and obvious from all that has been said, and from all that we know of ourselves. But the light of faith reveals both our own weakness and the remedy for that weakness, and St. Paul points to both in his conclusion: "Unhappy man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death? The grace of God by Jesus Christ our Lord." As, in another place, the Apostle teaches that the whole work of faith and obedience to God is wrought out by the strength of grace, "I can do nothing of myself, but I can do all things in Him that strengthens me."

* S. August. *Serm.* cliv. *De Verbis Apost.*

In further exposition we may quote two pithy sentences from St. Isidore. "The creature," he says, "knows himself better in God than in himself. The knowledge that he gets of himself from God is light and open day; but the knowledge that he gets of himself from himself is comparative darkness, and may be called the evening twilight. But when he discovers that what knowledge he gets of himself from himself is unsatisfactory, and he goes to God for better knowledge; he obtains that better knowledge as in the day." Again, the holy Doctor says: "The first gifts of God show us our culpability. Whilst we were under culpability we thought ourselves just. But the Divine Physician came to us, exposed our wounds, and composed Himself into a medicine by His death, with which to heal the wounds he had revealed."*

Since we are not an object to ourself; since the fundamental appetite of our soul is not towards ourself, but towards universal good; and since we are created to love God as the first principle of all love; how comes it that we can make ourself the object of our love, and even the first object of our love? How can that which is so barren be made the fertile object of affection? On what does self-love feed herself? Where does she obtain the fuel for the fire of that overmastering self-delight that darkens or extinguishes every nobler love? If we cannot live on self, how do we contrive to live on self-love? It must have a great deal of nourishment, because from the growth and ferment of self-love come the seven deadly sins, with their several broods of vices and vanities. To live upon one's naked natural self would be like feeding the body with its own substance, or like increasing the flame of life without air or fuel, or like filling the cup with its own emptiness. To bend back our affections directly upon ourself, would be to meet our conscience on the way, and so reveal the whole imposture. To understand on what our self-love acts, and from what it obtains nourishment, is one of the greatest secrets of self-knowledge, the possession of which is the key of self-control.

Love is the life of the will. Or, as St. Bonaventure puts it: "Love is the force of the will uniting itself to some beloved object." Or, as St. Augustine puts it: "Love is a certain life that unites, or desires to unite, two things together, that which loves

* S. Isidor. *Sentent.* Lib. I. c. xi.

with that which is beloved." This explanation of the nature of love is simple and complete. The will is the subject in which we love, that which the will loves is the object of its love. But if love be the union of two things, that which loves and that which is beloved, where is that object to be loved when we love ourself? How can self be at once the subject loving and the object that is loved? For love requires an object different from ourself to which we desire to unite ourself. As St. Augustine observes, love attracts us to the object that we love, and draws us with affection towards that beloved object. But how can self be drawn and attracted towards self? Self and self are not two things, not even two terms, but only one. How, then, can self desire self, or be drawn to self, or be united to self, as if it were not the very same, but another? The explanation of this mystery of our nature, as I have said, is the great key to self-knowledge.

Self-love, as we have repeatedly observed, is not directly exercised upon self. It works in roundabout ways, and by the reflection of one's self in many things that are distinct from us. We associate many persons and things with ourselves, and appropriate their qualities and virtues by a process of imagination as though their properties were our own. After once appropriating these desirable properties, qualities or virtues, we clothe them with our affections, and losing the just distinction between them and what is our own, we make these good things to be component parts of ourself. Self-love is sensitive, subtle, secret and circuitous in her ways; her delicacy lies chiefly in dissembling her selfish motives, and in wearing the appearance of good intentions; whilst her appetite is large, gross and voracious. She is like a net with innumerable meshes, handled by self-complacency and self-esteem, that catches up and brings home to her the gifts of God, the goods of His providence, the virtues and good qualities of them that are better than herself, and whatever good things she comes in contact with. For this net is the triple concupiscence of the eyes, the flesh, and the pride of life. What her self-complacency and esteem take hold of, she builds into her imagination and stores into her memory; there prides herself upon them, and displays them as her property. She cloaks herself, in fact, with a thousand good things, that when the truth is sifted and justice done, will be found to belong to her imagination rather than to herself. It is in the imagination, therefore, that self-love forms that fictitious

and objective image of herself, framed from so many borrowings which she loves and worships for her veritable self.

But when, by the grace of God, we come to His light that reveals all things, and when we exercise that truthful justice upon ourselves that we call humility, and give to all what in justice is their due, to God what is due to God, to every creature what is due to that creature, and to ourself what is due to us; we shall find ourselves stripped of much that our self-love and our vanity have appropriated, and reduced to our native poverty, which God alone can enrich with His truth and good, whenever He finds us sufficiently humble and sincere to ascribe His gifts to Him and not to ourselves.

The full capacity of the soul for greatness can only be opened by the grace and love of God. The great appetite for universal good that moves in the depths of the soul, and of which self-love is the corruption, can only be satisfied and contented by God. He alone can open out this vast capacity, and fill this immeasurable appetite for good. When the love of God is predominate in the will, it embraces all other loves within the love of God, which have their pure and beautiful order and noble generosity within this love, and from this love. But when we make ourself the centre of our love and the point of attraction, the very capacity of the soul for pure love is contracted, shrunk up, and corrupted with vanity and pride. Nothing is so narrow, nothing is so ungenerous as self-love, except the pride that grows out of self-love. The help, the kindness, the affection, even the polite flattery of our friends, become so many mirrors in which self-love contemplates herself with conceit, and swells herself with importance. Our temporal and social surroundings, if they have any show in them, pass through the reflection of self-love into self-consciousness, as though they were of the substance of the man, and were not those external things that are common to a circle of humanity. The family, the social circle, the corporation, the order, the profession, to which a man belongs, with all its ancestry, excellence, and reputation, elates the individual member with a corporate pride, as though it were his own particular and personal glory. And yet his own contribution to the corporate credit may be small even to invisibility, or nothing to boast of. Again, whatever knowledge, instruction, information, or example the self-loving man obtains from his fellow-men, he will lay an original

claim to, as though it were the product of his own mind, and the flow of his own fountain. "Behold, I am against the prophets, saith the Lord, who steal my words, each from his neighbour."

In short, self-love is the unrighteous steward. The things his master has entrusted to him he makes his own, and forgets his master's rights in them. Closing one ear to the voice of conscience, and the other to the voice of faith, and casting his eyes down that he may not see God, with the secret and serpentine embraces of his covetousness he draws all things from God to himself, and closes the account. With the net of the three concupiscences self-love draws her materials from every one's grounds with which to build that idol of the imagination, the fictitious object of her love and admiration. Even the virtues, the charities, and commendable manners that are seen or read of in the choice portions of humanity, however far from her life and character, self-love can find herself invested with, and make her own. These are her paintings and cosmetics that deform instead of beautifying, and make her a spectacle of conceit to God, to angels, and to men.

Fictions of life like these made the prophet exclaim, in his excess—that is, when rapt from himself he saw the truth in God—that "every man is a liar." He makes himself a falsehood with the fictions of self-love, and this falsehood is the contradiction of justice. But the humble man, who sees himself in God's light, who knows what he is by nature, and what as the receiver of God's gifts, who gives to God what is due to God, to every creature what is due to that creature, and to himself what is due to himself, and who is filled with gratitude to God only equalled by his lowly estimation of himself, is that just and sincere man so often commended in the Scriptures.

LECTURE VI.

SELF AND CONSCIENCE AS UNVEILED IN THE BOOK OF JOB.

"Behold my witness is in heaven, and He that knoweth my conscience is on high."—JOB xvi. 20.

THE providence of God works in two directions that seem to be opposite, but are both conservative of man. This is equally true in the natural and in the supernatural order of providence. The hand of God opens to pour blessings on us, and closes to take a firmer hold of us. The providence of prosperity enlarges us; the providence of adversity makes us stronger to endure. The one takes us abroad, the other concentrates us within; prosperity exalts us, adversity brings us down to safety; prosperity invites us to gratitude, adversity builds us up in fortitude and magnanimity; thus, whilst prosperity should make us grateful, adversity ought to make us generous. By what God gives us we know His goodness; by what He withholds from us we know our weakness and our wants: the one is His bounty, the other His discipline.

As the final end of man stands first in the view of God, and all things ordained for man have that final end for their chief consideration; the natural order of God's providence is directed with a final view to His supernatural providence, whose immediate object is our supernatural end. But this divine intention the supernatural man of faith can alone perceive. In the first order of providence, whilst man was yet innocent, and evil was unknown, all was prosperity. But *in hac providentia*, in this present dispensation, which is adapted to the fallen condition of man, one course of the divine providence moves in the direction of prosperity, and the other in the direction of adversity. The providence of

adversity is ordained for the preservation of the soul from herself, from her self-love, elation and pride, and to consolidate her in the stronger virtues of faith, hope, patience, and fortitude. With the gifts and advantages of nature God cherishes us in life: with the privations and afflictions in which He leaves our nature, the same divine goodness checks our presumption, reminds us of our dependence, and detaches us from the allurements of this earthly life. When man lost his innocence, and lost, with his innocence, his union with God, an ever-prospering order of providence in this world would have become to him the occasion of the greatest dangers and evils, it would have detached him more and more from God, and have filled him with an insufferable love of himself. It was therefore providentially ordained by the benignity of God, that the earth should produce thorns and briars, that man should toil for his bread in the sweat of his brow, and that he should encounter many tribulations. Whilst, therefore, the prospering providence of God was ordained to keep us in the world, the adverse order of that same providence is ordained to keep us from the world, that it may not too much absorb our life, and also to bring us back to conscience and to God. The providence of adversity looks to our trial, and to our education for the kingdom of heaven.

That higher, holier, and more direct providence of God, which is manifested to souls in the order of grace, works also, like the first, in two conservative directions. Here also we experience the open hand of visible bounty, and the closed hand that holds the soul under trial for her greater security. The gifts of divine grace come from God to the soul in the open daylight of prosperity, or in the obscure twilight of adversity; at one time the soul is cheered with the conscious and sensible presence of the divine lights and graces; at another they are given in darker, more secret and drier forms of which nature is but little conscious. But the night of trial is ordained to invigorate the soul with stronger faith and greater patience. The will is called upon to brace itself with fortitude, and to act less from the impulse of sensibility than from the strength of principle. The constitution of the soul is invigorated by effort, and is being prepared to act more purely and generously when the open day of prosperity returns. In the order of His supernatural providence God provides for each soul according to its actual dispositions and requirements; milk for the infants of grace; sweet

things for them who are but novices in the spiritual life; strong meats for the strong, whom He would make yet stronger with a hardy discipline.

The human soul is a deep abyss, whose inmost depths are unsearchable to human eyes. God alone knows what mysteries there are in those depths, and what are the subtle windings in her ways that escape our view. Self-love has many refuges. Sensuality is not all in the body, but has many secret ways of cleaving to the soul. Pride is not all on the surface, its virulence lies deeper, its bitterness is strongest in the roots, that lurk in the deeper foundations of our nature, and are there concealed in obscure caverns among the windings of the soul, and hidden from observation. The prophet David, with all his light and clear-sightedness, felt he had reason to say to God: "From my secret sins cleanse me, O Lord." And St. Paul found it not unwise to say: "I am not conscious to myself of anything, yet am I not hereby justified: but He that judgeth me is the Lord." But God searches the dark places of the soul as with lamps. The divine light makes us conscious of God; but our own darkness makes us conscious of ourselves. As the ray of His light beams into our souls, we see that God is light and truth; when that light is withdrawn, we know that we are darkness. He "enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world; and the light shineth in darkness." In the light of prosperity we are lighted up; in the twilight of adversity we are humbled down. In consolation we know the goodness of God; in desolation we know our own misery. Two things the just man must learn that he may become more just still, and two things he must practise. He must know more thoroughly what he is of himself, and what he is by the grace of God. He must take off his trust from himself, and must rest his confidence wholly upon God.

But this is accomplished by the alternate opening and closing of the hand of God's grace, at one time opening to us the serene day of spiritual prosperity, at another closing upon us in the twilight of adversity. David felt the divine gale when he sang: "Oh how great is the multitude of Thy sweetness, O Lord, which Thou hast hidden for them that fear Thee. . . . . Thou shalt hide them in the secret of Thy face, from the disturbance of men." But when he emerged from the trial of adversity, he felt its strengthening power, and how it detached him from trust in himself; and

he exclaims to all who are in like obscurity: "I said in the excess of my mind, I am cast away before Thine eyes. Therefore Thou hast heard the voice of my prayer, when I cried to Thee. O love the Lord, all ye His saints; for the Lord will requite truth, and will repay them abundantly that act proudly. Do ye manfully, and let your heart be strengthened, all ye that hope in the Lord."

When this night of adversity falls upon the faithful soul, it is eminently conservative, though it demands a great fidelity. For though the grace that is given is dry, obscure and secret, it is strong and sustaining. As the soul is left without the conscious sense of God's presence with her, she feels the weakness and misery of her nature with a certain bitterness; her native nothingness is searched more deeply, and her darkness becomes more sensible from the memory of her former light. Like the Apostle, she receives from herself the answer of death, not to trust in herself, but in God who lifts up the humble. The severer grace of God is cleansing her from her self-love, detaching her from the subtle cleavings of sensuality, and mortifying the roots of her pride. Through this interior discipline the soul gets a profounder knowledge of herself; her will is called upon for more vigorous exertion to meet her difficulties; her faith is deepened, however unconsciously, by its greater exercise; her hope calls for strength by the apparently greater distance of its motive, and by the less reason of truth that she finds in herself, and the greater need for trust in God; and her patience concentrates the powers of her soul into closer solidity. But if her trials fail to advance that soul in the more solid and vigorous virtues, the fault is not in the trial, but in the soul unfaithful to the proof demanded of her.

The right conduct of the soul under the discipline of adversity is given with admirable perfection in the second chapter of Ecclesiasticus: "Son, when thou comest to the service of God, stand in justice and fear, and prepare thy soul for temptation. Humble thy heart, and endure: incline thine ear and receive the words of understanding: and make not haste in the time of clouds. Wait on God with patience: join thyself to God, and endure, that thy life may be increased in the latter end. Take all that shall be brought upon thee: and in thy sorrow endure, and in thy humiliation keep patience. For gold and silver are tried in the fire, but acceptable men in the furnace of humiliation. Believe in God,

and He will recover thee: and direct thy way, and trust in Him."

When God subjects a soul to great trials because He would consolidate her virtues and accumulate great sanctity in her, He often accompanies her internal trials with external adversities, and permits external afflictions to befall her from the natural course of providence, as well as internal visitations from the closed hand in the divine and supernatural order. Trouble comes from the creature, wounding when least expected, as well as from internal desolation. Nor are the authors of these troubles always actuated by malice, like Satan with Job; but persons with no evil intentions will first misjudge, and then act on their misjudgment, like the four friends of Job. But when trial is heaped on trial, from without, from within, and on every side, and each of these trials gives weight and keenness to the other, self-love finds nothing to repose upon, pride has nothing left to feed upon, the whole subjective creature tastes of bitterness. To trust in one's self seems a mockery, for the whole spirit of the man is humbled, he finds himself out, and nothing remains but God, and hope, and patience.

It is not in prosperity that a man best knows himself. When the world smiles upon us, and all things around us flatter our self-love, our spirit must indeed be strongly united with God, if we are not drawn out of ourselves, away from our lights, and weakened in the central spring and force of our soul. Only the firmest souls, well disciplined already in the two ways of grace, who have secured a calm centre of life that is never allowed to be intruded upon by whatever external movement, can so use the world, when borne on the flood of prosperity, as though they used it not.

When God intends to raise souls to a great and noble sanctity, He does not trust them to prosperity. Sooner or later, openly or secretly, He sends troubles from the world, or permits them troubles from evil spirits, or troubles from themselves, either one, or two, or all of these, according to their strength. By these trials and reverses they learn to know themselves, they gain the deep consciousness of the helplessness of their nature, and draw closer to God from fear of themselves. Interior prosperity too much prolonged, especially with weak and untried souls, is often dangerous to advancement, more even than external prosperity on stronger souls. The soul gets elated with her gifts,

ruffles herself with conceits, and is contented with her surface lights, whilst in her deeper heart and lower sensibilities, where the roots of self-love and pride are by no means extirpated, the sharp remedies of humiliation and trial are needed, before the soil of the spirit can be purged and prepared for God's holier gifts of light and sanctity.

The greatest teachings are in great examples. Not to speak at this moment of the example of our Blessed Lord, in whom whatever is human is also divine; the sacred Scriptures give us great examples of human nature under the most terrible trials, where, what is but obscurely seen in ordinary cases, is there exhibited with a force and clearness that reveals our human nature to its lowest depths. Of these examples, the greatest in the Old Testament are those of Job and David, both princes, both rulers of men. In the case of both these princes and prophets we behold the history of a prosperity "mounting even to the heavens," and then of an adversity "descending even to the abyss." Yet each of them recovered his prosperity with a more wise, serene, and perfect soul. Both have left us the effusion of their souls, the historic truth of which is guaranteed by divine inspiration. And in both their histories we behold our human nature probed by suffering and sorrow to its lowest depths.

As a revelation of what is most hidden in human nature, there is nothing like the words of Job, except the Psalms of David and the Epistles of St. Paul, unless we may add to them the Confessions of St. Augustine. Then the venerable antiquity of this book of Job, the sublimity of its composition; the fact that it records the words of a patriarch who lived outside, if not before the Law of Moses; a book, nevertheless, that has been a profound instruction both to the Judaic and the Christian Church; all these facts combine to give a singular and solemn significance to its teachings. For the period of four thousand years the patience of Job has been a proverb that has strengthened many a weary mind.

Some have thought the book of Job to be a parable, and that Job had no personal existence. But, as St. Thomas observes after St. Gregory, although this may not much concern us, as far as the inspired doctrine of the book is concerned, it very much concerns us as far as historic truth is concerned.*

* S. Thomas, *Prolog. in Job.*

In the prophet Ezekiel we read: "When a land shall sin against me. . . . . If three just men, Noe, Daniel, and Job, shall be in it; they shall deliver their own souls by their justice, saith the Lord of Hosts." Here Job is numbered among living men with Noe and Daniel. In the book of Tobias it is said: "This trial, therefore, the Lord permitted to happen to him, that an example might be given to posterity, as also the patience of Job. For as the kings insulted over holy Job, so his relations and kinsmen mocked against his life." St. James also says, in his epistle: "Behold we account them blessed who have endured. You have heard of the patience of Job, and you have seen the end of the Lord, that He is merciful and compassionate." Thus, both the Old and New Testaments unite in presenting Job to us as an historic person.

To be brief, where much might be said, the Septuagint version, the Arabic and the old Italic identify Job with Jobab, who ruled in the city of Jethem. He was the son of Zara and Bosra, the fifth in descent from Abraham, through Esau, whose genealogy is recorded in Genesis, and who is numbered among the chiefs of Edom in Paralipomenon. A great deal of tradition supports this view, as well as the Greek version of Theodotion. Everything recorded of Job and his friends has a local character and colour; and there is a considerable coincidence in his history with names of persons and places given in other parts of sacred history. Then, Job is a conspicuous figure of Christ, a prophet of the Redemption, and of the Resurrection from the dead; and he is celebrated as a saint both in the Eastern menologies and in the Roman martyrology.

The book of Job embraces two great subjects—the personal trials of Job, and the controversy with his friends on the ways of God's providence. The friends of Job take up the position that God does not afflict the innocent, and that his sufferings prove him to be guilty of hidden crimes. Against this position and consequent accusation Job contends with all the might of his afflicted soul. He defends his innocence before men, and as men measure justice; but he accepts the position that "no man can be justified compared with God." This maxim, which is seven times repeated in the course of the dialogue, is the key of the whole controversy. Finally, God intervenes to justify His servant. But the object of this lecture is to treat of the personal afflictions and trials of Job

as they explain the more obscure mysteries of self and conscience.

At the opening of the book, Job is a prosperous Arab chief, surrounded with his family, ruling his people, and judging them at the city gate. He is looked upon by his people with great veneration for his piety, benevolence, and wisdom. Although living under the law of nature, he is a man of deep faith, inheriting the religious traditions of Noe and Abraham. He is a man of prayer, and the priest of his family, offering sacrifices to God in the faith of a Redeemer to come. He is fully conversant with the doctrines of creation, of providence, and of the fall of the angels. He is deeply conscious of the malignant influence of the evil spirits, and of the good offices of the holy spirits. His soul is keenly alive to the necessity and power of divine grace, and he sublimely teaches that "the breath of the Almighty giveth intelligence." And, as we have said, he is both the figure and the prophet of the Divine Mystery of Redemption.

Let us first hear his own description of his former dignity and prosperity. "Who will grant me," he says, "that I might be as in the months past, as in the days when God kept me. When His lamp shined over my head, and I walked by His light in darkness. As I was in the days of my youth, when God was familiarly in my tabernacle. When the Almighty was with me, and my servants round about me. When I washed my feet with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil. When I went to the gate of the city, and in the street they prepared me a chair. The young men saw me, and hid themselves: the old men rose up in my presence. The princes ceased to speak, and laid their fingers on their mouth. The rulers held their peace, and their tongue cleaved to their throat. The ear that heard me blessed me; and the eye that saw me gave witness to me; because I had delivered the poor man that cried out, and the fatherless that had no helper. The blessing of him that was ready to perish came upon me; and I comforted the widow. I was clad with justice, and I clothed myself with my justice as with a robe and a diadem. I was an eye to the blind, and a foot to the lame. I was the father of the poor; and the cause I knew not I searched out diligently. I broke the jaws of the wicked man: and out of his teeth I took the prey. And I said: I shall die in my nest, and as a palm tree shall multiply my days. . . . . When

I sat as a king, with his army standing about him, yet I was a comfort of them that mourned."

Such is the wise, holy, prosperous, and powerful Idumean chief, who is destined, by his privations and sufferings, to reveal to mankind what man is in himself, and what by the grace and strength of God. The holy patriarch is not punished for iniquities committed, but is afflicted for the revelation of his virtues, for the perfecting of his soul, and for the instruction of mankind.

When the sons of God came to stand before the Lord, and Satan, after walking through the earth, came also to the Eternal Presence, the Almighty said to him: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him on the earth, a simple, upright man, fearing God and avoiding evil?" Then Satan pleaded the self-love and self-interest of Job. "Doth Job fear God in vain? Hast thou not made a fence for him, and his house, and his substance round about, blessed the work of his hands, and his possession hath increased on the earth? But stretch forth Thy hand a little, and touch all he hath, and see if he bless Thee not to Thy face." Then, to prove that Job did not serve God for temporal reward, but from faith and piety, the Lord said to Satan: "Behold all that he hath is in thy hand: only put not thy hand on his person." Suddenly come the messengers of calamity one upon another. The holy man finds himself stripped of his possessions, bereaved of his children, and his house destroyed over his head. He rose up, rent his garments, fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, saying: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away: blessed be the name of the Lord." This is the language of one so just and so humble, that at the very instant of his visitation, he can recognize what he is of himself, and what by the good gifts of God's providence.

Then Satan stood again in the sight of God, and the Lord said to him: "Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a man simple and upright, fearing God and avoiding evil, and still keeping his innocence? But thou hast moved me against him, that I should afflict him without cause." And Satan answered, and said: "Skin for skin: and all that a man hath, he will give for his life; but put forth Thy hand, and touch his bones and his flesh, and then shalt Thou see

that he will bless Thee to Thy face. And the Lord said to Satan: Behold he is in thy hand, but yet save his life."

Outwardly and inwardly God permits Satan to test the just and innocent man, until the trial comes nigh to the fountain of his life. The body of Job is delivered up to the tempter, and also his imagination, but the substance of the soul is sacred from his touch. He is struck, in his bereaved condition, with ulceration and loathsome disease from head to foot. The worms in his flesh anticipate the grave, and over his festering state of misery he exclaims: "I have said to rottenness: Thou art my father: to worms: my mother and my sister." His refuge is the solitary heap of refuse by his once prosperous gate, where he casts his quaking limbs, exposed by day and night to every change of the elements. Consolation has left his soul; darkness has overcome his mind, that was once serene with light. His imagination is assailed with fears and terrors; his soul is filled with bitterness. Thrown back from everything that had hitherto been his comfort; thrown back from every pleasant sensation through the sufferings of his earthly frame; thrown back from every agreeable image on which his mind could repose, through the fears that haunt his imagination; thrown back from the sweet light of serene intelligence, through the darkness that overshadows his mind; thrown back upon his naked soul, where horror contends with bitterness, the afflicted man finds nothing to intervene between his conscience and his denuded self, between God hidden in the cloud from his mind and sense, and himself enveloped in suffering and obscurity.

His wife is still left him, not as a comforter but as a tempter. She rails at his simplicity, and with ironical advice tells him, in no gentle terms, to "bless God and die." And what is his reply? Softly he says to her: "Thou hast acted as one of the foolish women; if we have received good things from the hand of God, why should we not receive evil? In all these things Job did not sin with his lips." His three friends, when they beheld him, knew him not. With Oriental vehemence they express their grief and their compassion. After which, "they sat with him seven days and nights on the ground. And no man spake a word to him: for they saw that his grief was very great." For those seven long days and nights, watched by his silent friends, the afflicted man takes his own silent refuge in his soul, which Satan cannot touch; and

endures the pains of sense, the pains of outward and inward privation, the horrors that spring from his affrighted imagination and the fears of uncertainty of what may follow. He contemplates the helplessness of his nature, and explores the mystery of his being.

After this long and dreary silence, "Job opened his mouth, and cursed his day, and he said: Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said: A man child is conceived. Let that day be turned into darkness, and let not the light shine upon it." In this mysterious outburst of what his mind saw, his sensitive nature spoke in the strongest terms of horror and anathema. And what he saw was the origin of all human misery. He saw that original sin of the human race; he saw how it had descended in the conception and birth of man, and how its calamities had come like a flood upon himself. The purest souls see the consequence of that evil the most clearly. Although the prophet Jeremias was sanctified in his mother's womb, he exclaims, with an equal vehemence of malediction: "Cursed be the day wherein I was born; let not the day in which my mother bare me, be blessed. . . . . Why came I out of the womb, to see labour and sorrow, and that my days should be spent in confusion." Both the prophet of the Mosaic law and the prophet of the natural law, denounce the sin of Adam, says St. Jerome. In their own miseries and sorrows they bewail the miseries and sorrows of all mankind, and trace them to their primal source in that criminal apostasy.

Job cursed not the day of his creation, but in judgment and justice he anathematized that original evil which attended his conception and birth. He wished to be an abortive from this evil. His malediction, as St. Gregory observes, was not depraved but holy, and in accord with that Divine malediction, which was passed upon the original sin of man. We are prepared, therefore, to hear this man of faith ask of God: "Who can make him clean who is conceived of unclean seed? Is it not Thou who alone art?"

But we shall not embrace the full significance of the sufferings and sorrows of this just and innocent man, unless we also contemplate him as an appointed figure of Christ. In the agonies of his nature and the resignation of his soul, he prepares us to contemplate the two wills in Christ, the human and the divine. In the

sacred agony of Christ, the inferior and sensitive will exclaims: "Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;" whilst the superior will, one with the divine, adds the oblation: "Nevertheless not as I will, but as Thou willest." In his expiatory abandonment and desolation on the cross, He first exclaims: "My God, my God, why hast Thou forsaken me!" but, in expiring, he again cries out: "Into Thy hands I commend my spirit." So, in the words of Job, we sometimes hear the voice of his inferior nature in lamentation, and then of his superior will in resignation. Again, Job, like Christ, whom he is prefiguring, has to contend, in the fight of patience, with invisible as well as with visible adversaries, and at the same time to endure his own grievous sufferings and utter desolation. But in the case of Job, God alone, who secretly sustains him, knows the final issue of his sufferings.

His first exclamations are undoubtedly the cries of his inferior nature, and after the maledictions upon that original sin that came into existence with his nature, he says: "Before I eat, I sigh: and as overflowing waters, so is my roaring. For the fear which I feared hath come upon me: and that which I was afraid of has befallen me. Have I not dissembled? Have I not kept silence? Have I not kept quiet? And indignation is come upon me." The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom. But whoever is called to a high and divine wisdom, must first be purified from the secret remains of self-love and sensuality with great and most searching fears. To accomplish this refining of his spirit, the whole nature of Job is pierced through with fears, not only of himself, but especially of such sins as may be hidden from his sight, and of such weaknesses as are unknown to him, however visible to the eye of God. Hence his often-repeated prayer that his sins may be made known to him. "How many are my iniquities and sins? Make me know my crimes and offences. Why hidest Thou thy face, and thinkest me Thy enemy?"

While his friends sympathize with his sufferings, they are misled by a stern and cruel error, which is fixed like a principle in their minds. They are possessed with the notion that God afflicts none but the guilty in this life, whilst he prospers the innocent; and of course they do not know that God has permitted Satan to afflict Job, even to the verge of his life, to test his justice, to give him the victory over evil, and to perfect his soul. Their own grievous error is the ground of all their accusations, and it is

against this error that holy Job directs his replies. But those replies are mingled with his own reflections upon himself, and with his prayers and complaints to God.

Eliphaz the Themanite opens his discourse with this charge, and the rest pursue it to the end of the controversy. "If we begin," he says, "to speak to thee, perhaps thou wilt take it ill: but who can withhold the words he has conceived. Behold thou hast taught many, and hast strengthened the weary hands: thy words have confirmed them that were staggering, and thou hast strengthened the trembling knees; but now the scourge has come upon thee, and thou faintest it hath touched thee, and thou art troubled. Where is thy fear, thy fortitude, thy patience, and the perfection of thy ways? Remember, I pray thee, who ever perished being innocent? or when were the just destroyed?" The charge is most grievous and unjust, because the loss of his justice and innocence is not concluded from any known misconduct, but from his sufferings alone; and so the charge falls, by implication, upon the providence of God as well as upon Job, for which reason God rebukes it in the end. Yet this judgment passed upon Job, on his dunghill, was passed upon Christ on His cross.

But Job replies throughout with the firmest assertion of his justice before men, although he will not assert his justice before God. Judged by man's day he is innocent; nor do his sufferings prove the contrary. But before the infinite purity and justice of God, he fears and trembles, not knowing what God may find in him. He can establish his justice before men, and to them he says: "God forbid that I should judge you to be just: till I die I will not depart from my innocence. My justification, which I have begun to hold, I will not forsake: for my heart doth not reprehend me in all my life." But when the holy patriarch turns from the judgment of men to the judgment of God, he holds another language. "He alloweth not my spirit to rest, and He filleth me with bitterness. If strength be demanded, He is most strong: if equity of judgment, no man dare bear witness for me: if I would show myself innocent, He shall prove me wicked. Although I should be simple, even this my soul shall be ignorant of, and I shall be weary of my life." Again, he exclaims: "I have sinned, what shall I say to Thee, O keeper of men? Why dost Thou not remove my sin? and why dost Thou not take away my iniquity?"

When, therefore, Eliphaz told his vision of the night, how there stood one whose countenance he knew not, an image before his eyes, and he heard a voice, as it were of a gentle wind, which said: "Shall man be justified in comparison with God, or shall a man be more pure than his Maker?" Job responded in complete accordance with the heavenly voice: "Indeed, I know it is so, and that man cannot be justified compared with God. If he will contend with Him, he cannot answer him one for a thousand."

This is the keynote of the whole mind of Job. It is also the cause of his inmost fears, lest there should be that found in him that accords not with the justice and purity of God. This, also, is the severest of his inward trials—that, oppressed with darkness and withered with dryness, he knows not that these very storms of tribulation are purifying his nature, and preparing him for greater sanctity. He therefore cries out, in his anguish: "The arrows of the Lord are within me, the rage whereof drinketh up my spirit, and the terrors of the Lord war against me." These fears are shaking out from him the last remnants of trust in himself, and he exclaims: "Who will grant me that my request may come; and that God may give me what I look for. . . . . For what is my strength, that I can hold out? or what is my end that I should keep patience?"

Amazed at the void in himself, when reduced to nothing but himself; astonished at the weakness of his nature, when left unsustained by any created help, or sensibility, and as it would seem to him, deserted even by Divine help, again he cries out: "I am brought to nothingness; as a wind Thou hast taken away my desire; and my prosperity hath passed away as a cloud. And my soul fadeth away within myself, and the days of affliction possess me."

Thus David, also, cried to God, when searched by trial to the centre of his soul: "I am brought to nothing, and I knew it not. I am become as a beast of burden before Thee, and I am always with Thee." With a capacity for good that is so great, and with an appetite for good that is so urgent, yet with such an incapacity to live upon one'sself; the soul that has lost hold of the external creature, has lost hold of the strength and comfort of her own body; has lost hold of her pleasant imaginings; has lost the serenity of her light; has lost, above all, the assurance of peace and friendship with God; the soul in such a state of privation, finds out her

nothingness, finds out, with the fullest certainty, that she is no object or cause of content to herself. So deeply is the nature of the suffering patriarch searched through, that, in astonishment with the spectacle, he exclaims to God: "What is a man that Thou shouldst magnify him? or why dost Thou set Thy heart upon him? Thou visitest him early in the morning, and Thou provest him suddenly. I have sinned, what shall I do to Thee, O keeper of men? Why hast Thou set me opposite to Thee, and I am become a burden to myself."

Then, turning from God to himself, he pours out his anguish anew: "My soul is weary of myself, I will let go my speech against myself, I will speak in the bitterness of my soul. I will say to God: "Do not condemn me; tell me why Thou judgest me so? Doth it seem good to Thee that Thou shouldst calumniate me, and oppress me, the work of Thy hands, and help the counsel of the wicked?" The more he despairs of help in himself, the more earnestly he turns to God for help: "Thou hast granted me life and mercy, and Thy visitation hath kept my spirit. Although Thou conceal these things in Thy heart, yet I know that Thou rememberest all things. If I have sinned, and Thou hast spared me for an hour, why dost Thou not suffer me to be clean from my iniquity?"

The sense of her remoteness from God, in a soul that has learnt that there is nothing worth the soul but God, fills her with new fears of His unapproachable majesty and sanctity. At the contemplation of God, who has not yet appeared in our human nature to reassure us, Job is struck with awe, and with consequent dread of himself. He abdicates the whole reign of self-love, and approaches his deliverance.

The clouds begin to move, and the light begins to dawn. The inspiring voice of a serener grace begins to rise above the moanings of the sufferer. His one desire and prayer is that God would completely purify his soul. "Two things only do not to me, and then from Thy face I shall not hide myself: withdraw Thy hand from me, and let not Thy dread terrify me. Call me, and I will answer Thee; or else I will speak, and do Thou answer me. How many are my iniquities and sins? Make me know my crimes and offences. Why hidest Thou Thy face, and thinkest me Thy enemy? Against a leaf that is carried away by the wind, Thou showest Thy power; and pursuest dry stubble. For

Thou writest bitter things against me, and consumest me for the sins of my youth."

We have seen the fearful process by which a man is stripped of all things but himself, and the desolations by which the hidden remains of self-love and pride are driven from their concealments. We have seen the amazement and the terror, the contrition and distress, of a soul searched through with lamps until she finds out that she is nothing apart from God. We have seen how, amidst the obscurations of the soul, the secret light of God's law in the conscience fulfils its four-fold office, whilst humiliation and sorrow are opening out the hidden things of that soul. Firstly, it reveals the sanctity of God. Secondly, it makes known to him his own want of sanctity. Thirdly, it exposes to him how helpless he is, by nature, to rise above himself. Fourthly, it shows him what a great need he has of God's light and grace, as well to know himself as to remove his iniquity, and to bring him into union with God.

Of the prophetic character of Job's sufferings, as he figures forth the person of Christ, his innocence among the most malignant accusations, and the terrible course of His passion and crucifixion, we have the most vivid representation in the sixteenth chapter of the record of his sufferings and sayings. "My enemy hath beheld me with terrible eyes. They have opened their mouths upon me, and reproaching me they have struck me on the cheek, they are filled with my pains, God hath shut me up with the unjust man, and hath delivered me into the hands of the wicked. I, that was formerly so wealthy, am all on a sudden broken to pieces. He hath taken me by the neck, He hath broken me, and hath set me up to be His mark. He hath compassed me about with lances, He hath wounded my loins. He hath not spared, and hath poured out my bowels on the earth. He hath torn me with wound upon wound, He hath rushed in upon me like a giant. I had sewed sack-cloth upon my skin, and have covered my flesh with ashes. My face is swollen with weeping, and my eyelids are dim. These things have I suffered without the iniquity of my hand, when I offered pure prayers to God. O earth, cover not thou my blood, neither let my cry find a hiding place in thee. For behold my witness is in heaven, and He that knoweth my conscience is on high. My friends are full of words: my eye poureth out tears to God. And O that a man might be judged with God, as the

son of man is judged with his companions. For behold short years pass away, and I am walking in a path, by which I shall not return."

The sufferings of all just men obtain their purifying value from the sufferings of Christ, whether they anticipate and prophecy the sufferings of Christ, or whether they follow and fill up the measure of those sufferings. For the redeeming Head of humanity suffers with the members, and the members suffer with the Head. "All that will live godly in Christ," says St. Paul, "shall suffer persecution." And this is equally true of the prophets of Christ and the servants of Christ, so much so, and so mingled are the sufferings of the prophets of Christ with the sufferings of Christ, that sometimes they plainly describe the sufferings of Christ, and sometimes they more plainly describe their personal sufferings. In every faithful soul the one is blended with the other.

Against the ever-recurring accusations of his adversaries, Job continued to assert his justice, and never for a moment wavers. He is just according to their measure of justice. He is not wicked on their argument and proof of wickedness, not wicked because he is suffering. Such an argument, were it admitted, would destroy the whole proof of human redemption, and this false principle is therefore destroyed beforehand. It was essential that the mind of men should be imbued with the truth, that innocence may be present under great and overwhelming sufferings. But whilst he indicates this general truth, the patriarch of suffering puts the point of difference between the human and divine side of his own case in this pithy sentence: "O that a man might be judged before God, as the son of man is judged with his companion." That is, happy would it be for the man, if the eye of God looked no farther for his guilt than the eye of his fellow-man can see. But before the Eternal Judge he has no defence to make, because he has not the knowledge of himself that God has of him. His life has been pure as men estimate purity. And he solemnly declares: "I made a covenant with my eyes, that I would not think upon a virgin. For what part should God from above have in me, and what inheritance the Almighty from on high?" And yet before God, who sees the inner parts of man, and judges him by the purest laws of humility, charity and sanctity according to the bent of his motives in the light of his conscience

he cannot venture to assert his innocence, however unconscious he may be of present guilt. So his thoughts turn back upon the one burden of his wailing song: "Man cannot be justified compared with God. . . . . He is wise in heart, and mighty in strength: who hath resisted Him, and hath had peace? . . . . God, whose wrath no man can resist, and under whom they stoop that bear up the world. What am I then, that I should answer Him, and have words with Him? I who although I should have any just thing, would not answer, but would make supplication to my judge."

The more a soul is made conscious of her nothingness apart from God, the more need she feels for that fundamental justice which we call humility, which subjects her to God, and opens her spirit to the grace and inspiration of His Holy Spirit. This enables her to deal justly and truthfully with God, and to look hopefully and expectantly to Him for her deliverance from the bondage of evil, whether open or secret, knowing that God is the place of the soul, and that however distant He may be in consolation, He is close at hand in presence and power; the just man therefore feels a certain secret sense of God's presence, whatever dark clouds intervene, and is not altogether unconscious of the secret strength with which he is sustained.

It is evident through all the lamentations of Job, that although his conscience reprehends him not in all his life, yet he yearns most earnestly for greater light of conscience, that he may see whatever there is recorded against him, and so may know what he has to condemn that he may not be condemned, and what he has to punish that he may not be punished. "Let a man," says St. Anselm, "go up into the judgment-seat of his mind, and set himself before his own eyes; and when he has set up judgment in his heart, let his thoughts accuse him, and his conscience be the witness; and let fear be the executioner. Then let the blood of his soul flow in tears on his confession. Let the image of the future judgment stand before his eyes, and whatever he sees in himself that the judge to come would reprehend and punish, let him at once reprehend and punish in himself. For whether sins be little or great, they cannot be passed over unjudged and unpunished. They must be either condemned and punished by the man, or be judged and avenged by God. But the divine vengeance is stopped when the man is converted, for if we judge ourselves

we shall not be judged; by which we understand, that we must be punished in this life or in the life to come."*

Even in the darkest hours, when the words of Job sound almost like accents of despair, the holy man was not unconscious of God's secret support. We hear him, therefore, saying: "Thou hast granted me life, and mercy, and Thy visitation hath kept my spirit." And he even says: "Although He should kill me, I will hope in Him: yet I will reprove my way in His sight."

But when the cloud opens, and God draws nearer to His servant, and he begins to see the divine intention for which his sufferings are permitted, how sweet and touching are the words of the reviving man. "Who will grant me that I may know and find Him, and come even to His throne? . . . . But He knoweth my way, and hath tried me as gold that passeth through fire: my foot hath followed His steps, I have kept His way, and have not declined from it. I have not departed from the commandments of His lips: and the word of His mouth I have hid in my bosom. . . . . God hath softened my heart, and the Almighty hath troubled me."

Then from the depths of that purified heart springs up the complete expression of Job's faith and trust: "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and on the last day I shall rise out of the earth: and I shall be clothed again with my skin, and in my flesh I shall see my God; this, my hope, is laid up in my bosom."

We have heard three voices from the soul of Job; the voice of wailing over his denuded, helpless and suffering self; the voice of conscience, justifying him before men, accusing him before God; and the voice of faith, to which, through all his trials, he holds with unwavering steadfastness. We have yet to hear the voice of God reinvigorating and comforting His servant; and again the voice of Job, subjecting his soul to God in humiliation for his faults, and in gratitude for his justification and deliverance.

The Lord answered Job out of a whirlwind, and after rebuking him for wrapping up counsel in unskilful words, He said to Job: "Gird up thy loins like a man; I will ask thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? Tell me, if thou hast understanding." Then follows that magnificent chain of questions on the creation and providence of God. The mind of Job is humbled into conscious ignorance, and the

* S. Anselm, *in Epist. ad Corinth.* c. xi.

conceit of his wisdom purified; and in a lowly spirit he replies: "What can I answer, who have spoken inconsiderately? I will lay my hand on my mouth. One thing I have spoken, which I wish I had not said; and another, to which I will add no more."

In three ways our Creator questions us. He strikes us with the rod of trial, that we may answer by exhibiting the extent of our patience and resignedness. He puts some hard command on us, that we may answer by showing the extent of our obedience. He opens certain truths to our understanding, whilst He keeps others in His divine reserves, and questions us upon them, that we may manifest the measure of our humility. Thus God questions us by afflictions, by demands upon our will, and by the exposure of our ignorance; and He exacts the reply of patience, obedience, and humility. The Almighty opens out the wonders of His creation to Job. This is His interrogation. Job replies by humbling himself to the dust before the Might, the Majesty, and the Wisdom of God. Made conscious of his ignorance, he yields his own poor conceptions of God's works to those grand conceptions of them which God has given him. Yet he perfectly understands that these sublimer views of them are so far from being the full mind of God, that they are only adaptations of the truth to his own limited understanding, and that what is most wondrous in those works is only known to the divine intelligence. "Whence then cometh wisdom? And where is the place of understanding? It is hidden from the eyes of all living. God understandeth the way of it, and He knoweth the place of it."

After Job had heard all the words of the Lord, he replied, as he was commanded, to the divine interrogation: "I know that Thou canst do all things, and no thought is hidden from Thee. Who is this that hideth counsel without knowledge? Therefore I have spoken unwisely, and things that above measure exceeded knowledge. Hear, and I will speak; I will ask Thee, and do Thou tell me. With the hearing of the ear I have heard Thee, but now my eye seeth Thee. Therefore I reprehend myself, and do penance in dust and ashes."

As sight gives us a far more perfect knowledge than hearing, so does the purified spirit of Job give him an incalculably greater knowledge of God and himself, than the knowledge he had before his same spirit was purified by suffering and self-searching. What was before to him but as the voice of God whispering from a

distance is now as a vision of God. "I have heard Thee, but now my soul seeth Thee." The darkness that makes the soul sensible how God is her light and comfort has departed; the desolation that taught him his nothingness before God is gone. A serene humility has taken the place of that scouring affliction, and rising up from his sufferings, the holy man is filled with light, and refreshed with the sweetness of the Holy Spirit. His conscience has borne witness to the rectitude of his intentions; but now he sees so much more clearly what God is, and what he is in himself, that the holy chief, with awe and reverence, falls prostrate before God, and confessing his weakness, with profound humility exclaims: "I condemn myself, and do penance in dust and ashes."

On this conclusion St. Gregory remarks: "The less a man sees of himself, the less he is displeased with himself. The more light and grace he obtains, the more he knows that he is reprehensible. When raised up in his inward powers, he sees a law of life above him, and he strives to come up to its level. But soon he finds that his weakness holds him back, and that in many things he falls away from that law of life; for he feels a heavy burden upon him that keeps him down from the perfection of the law. After trials had scoured and searched his nature through, the blessed Job was brought very near to the law of life, its light shone fully upon him, and this caused him to turn with keen rebuke upon himself, and to say: 'I condemn myself.' But self-condemnation calls for penance and punishment, which caused him to add: 'I do penance in dust and ashes.' Whoever stands before God with true knowledge of himself, knows that he is but dust and ashes. Abraham had this true knowledge of himself, and prostrate before God, he also said: 'I will adore the Lord, who am but dust and ashes.' Dust and ashes humble the body with punishment after it has caused the soul to sin. Rude discomforts to the flesh express the compunction of remorse in the soul. Dust and ashes remind us that as God has made us from the dust we ought not to take to ourselves the glory of His gifts; and remind us also that through God's sentence on our sin, our bodies shall return to dust and ashes."*

Then God made the blessed Job the intercessor for his friends, and said: "Go to my servant Job, and offer for yourselves a holo-

* S. Greg. Mag *Moral, in Job*, Lib. xxxv. c. 5.

caust: and my servant Job shall pray for you: his face will I accept, that folly be not imputed to you: for you have not spoken right things before me, as my servant Job hath. So Eliphaz, the Themanite, and Baldad, the Suhite, and Sophar, the Naamathite, went, and did as the Lord had spoken to them: and the Lord accepted the face of Job. The Lord also was turned at the penance of Job, when he prayed for his friends. And the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before."

We cannot better conclude than with the words with which Origen brings his Comment to a close. Blessed are they who imitate thee, Oh most blessed Job. Blessed are they who follow thy steps; blessed are they who like thee are consummated in faith and piety, by enduring whatever befalls them. They will rest eternally with God the Father, to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

LECTURE VII.

ON EVIL AND THE ORIGIN OF EVIL.

"Thou art not a God that willeth iniquity."—Ps. v. 5.

KNOWLEDGE becomes wisdom when it reaches the heart and draws the will from evil to good. Next to the knowledge of God and of His gifts, there is no knowledge that clears the mind from so many delusions, solves so many of the mysteries of life, or more effectually helps us to the wise shaping of our conduct, than that which gives us a clear insight into the origin and tendency of evil, to which we justly ascribe all our failures, sufferings and miseries.

To search evil through with intelligence is like searching darkness through with light. To sense and imagination darkness looks like something positive and even substantial; but where the light enters the darkness disappears, and we see that it is nothing whatever but the absence of light, that darkness is in fact but nothingness. Nevertheless as darkness seems to fill space, and so presents an image to the imagination, it is difficult for the intelligence to correct the error of the imagination, and the more difficult because in our childhood, when we live by imagination, darkness is an occasion of terror, which the age of reason and experience alone corrects. The minds of a great many persons outside the Christian faith are not unlike those of children in this respect, that they mistake shadows for substances, and materialize what has no material existence; nor does culture always exempt them from this infirmity.

In what concerns the character of evil or the cause from which it springs, this kind of error has been conspicuous in all ages

among men who have not communion with God; and such errors have been fostered not only through the predominance of imagination, but also through the genius of language. Good is that which exists; but evil is the negative of good, and consequently it is the privation of existence. But language is always affirmative in its form; it affirms that which is *not* as well as that which *is*, and the habit of affirming negations gives to that which does not exist a semblance of existence. We not only speak but think in language, and this often deceives those minds that rest more on the forms of language than on their internal clearness of thought. We do not express a denial of existence by the simple term *not*, which would be a pure denial of existence, but we say *it is not*, which affirms the negative, as though that negative had some kind of existence. Clear thought alone corrects this infirmity of language. This form however is not so apt to mislead careless or defective thinkers so much as those positive terms which express things without substantial existence in substantives. For example, we use the term shadow, and imagine it to have an existence, although it is only the absence of light. We imagine hunger to have a real existence, although it is only the want of food. Thus we assign the inconvenience we suffer from the absence of light to some positive cause in the darkness; as we assign the pangs arising from want of food to some positive cause in our hunger, which is a mere negation. In like manner we confound the pains and sufferings brought on us by evil with the evil itself, although that evil is nothing but the privation of good, but of a good due to our nature of which we have deprived ourselves. This habit of affirming the existence of evil as though it were some positive thing, and the further habit of confusing the pains and sufferings that follow upon evil with the evil itself, are the causes that have so often led to the notion that evil is either some substantial thing, or some quality or power in the creation. This substantiating of evil, which is a mere product of the imagination, has given rise to many false philosophies as well as heresies, upholding the idea that evil has an external existence, and has either had a divine creator, or is something evolved from the creation.

How men came to mistake evil for something substantial, has been well explained by St. Athanasius in the following passage of his great Oration against the Gentiles. "It has become

needful," he says, "to clear up this idle opinion with the truth of ecclesiastical doctrine, which holds that evil is neither from God nor in God; nor was it from the beginning, nor is there any nature of evil. But as men withdrew from the contemplation of good, they began to imagine and to devise to themselves, according to their will, such things as were not. Whilst the sun is shining and lighting the earth, a man may close his eyes and think he is surrounded with darkness, even when all is lightsome; but he walks in his imaginary darkness, and stumbles, and encounters rocks and rough places, fancying he has no light but is surrounded with darkness, and imagining he is using his eyes though he sees nothing. In like manner, when the human soul closes those eyes wherewith God may be seen, she fashions evils to herself, and whilst she moves among them, she imagines she is doing something, and is ignorant that she is doing nothing, for the things she imagines have no real existence. As she has not persevered in that condition in which she was created, she appears in that state into which she has degraded herself. For she was created to see God, and to be enlightened by Him; but instead of God, she has gone in quest of uncertain things and of darkness, as the Scripture says: 'God made man right, and he hath entangled himself in an infinitude of questions.'"*

St. Athanasius here points to three causes that co-operate in bringing man to evil, and leading him to mistake it for good. First, in turning his mind from God he exchanges light for obscurity, and mistakes that obscurity for light; secondly, he projects his imagination into that obscurity, fancying things to be there that are not there; thirdly, in its absence from truth and good his will is predisposed to accept that for truth and good which is only imaginary. Thus error, which is nothing, is mistaken for truth, which is the light of things. Thus evil is mistaken for good, although it is nothing but defection from good.

Error and evil are so closely allied, that he who does an evil is said to commit an error, but the error is commonly as much the fault of the will as the evil which follows the error. Error is the corruption of truth as evil is the corruption of good; in error we take imaginary for actual truth, as in evil we take imaginary for real good. But in both cases it is the will that is in fault; for in

* S. Athanas. *Orat. contra Gentiles*, c. vii.

the first case, it is the will that accepts and gives its assent to an image of the imagination or to an opinion, as though it were the truth in its clear evidence; and in the second case the will gives itself to imaginary good as though it were the real good that perfects our nature. From this it follows that the created will is the author of evil.

To a mind endowed with faith and humility, the origin of evil presents no difficulty; faith opens the mind to divine principles, and humility puts that mind in the just point of view for apprehending their application. When the soul thinks in the light of God, and realizes to herself His supreme and absolute perfection, and then considers how evil is opposed to that perfection, the very possibility of God being the author or the cause of evil must vanish from the mind as an inconceivable absurdity. Even the natural reason of man, when freed from fancies and prejudgments, that is, when exercised in its own clearness, must bring us to the same conclusion. For you cannot think of God as the author of evil without first thinking of Him as less than God.

When we come to consider what it is that inclines the will to accept imaginary for real good; and again, what it is that inclines men to invent false and plausible theories of the origin of evil, we are brought to the very roots of our weak and selfish nature. The first cause is to be found in the weakness of the creature made from nothing, and when not resting on God for support, inclined by nature to its native nothingness. The second is the self-love of the natural will, inclining the soul to inferior things, over which she can hold sway, instead of to those superior things to which she must be subject as being herself inferior to them. These two defects explain the origin of human evil. But when we come to explain the false theories on the origin of evil, we must add a third cause, and that is the pride that springs from self-love, and which generates in the soul a false and imaginary estimation of herself, which inclines her to ascribe to herself the good she does, or imagines she does, and to some other cause the evil that she suffers from.

It is not difficult to find examples of this temper. Who has not known persons who are always in trouble, but never in the wrong? Such persons are proud, sensitive, suspicious and irritable; they have a great sense of evil, because they suffer much, but they never see the cause of evil in themselves—it is always

in some one else. They do wrong-headed things, but never know, or never admit, that they are wrong-headed; as their best friends have been the most active in their interests, they generally imagine them to be the cause of their chief sufferings. But those who look on with calm eyes see clearly that the evil is in themselves, and that the root of it is pride.

Pride blinds the mind to the errors and the evils which it works in its possessor. But there have been giants of pride, with great intellects that pride has greatly perverted. With strong imagination, and an oppressive sense of the evils from which they suffer, yet blinded with the notion of their own excellence, and flattered in that notion by their admirers, in their ignorance of themselves these giants of pride will naturally ascribe the origin of the evil from which they suffer to another cause than themselves, and to a greater rather than to a less cause than themselves. Hence arose the theories that ascribe the cause of evil to a first principle of evil, or to some evil divinity who mingles his evil work with the good works of the God supremely good. Whether these theories first originated in Bactria, in Chaldæa, in India or in Persia, they pervaded the religious philosophies of all those countries; and were rife in Persia when Christianity began to spread in the world, as well as other doctrines equally wild and fantastic, such as that of the origin of darkness, and that of the delusive nature of the material creation. But the disciples of these doctrines attempted to combine them with the Christian faith, and from this mixture arose the most monstrous sects that the Church has had to contend with, from the early Gnostics, with their endless diversities, to the successive forms of the Manichean heresy.

As error is the corruption of truth, and as the long-delivered traditions of mankind are especially open to corruption, where not divinely protected, we may glance for a moment at those early traditions of truth that may have been warped and perverted into supporting the doctrine of an evil principle or deity. The creation of the angels, and the fall of a part of them into evil, might be easily perverted into an emanation of good and evil divinities from the profundity of one first principle. As the fall of Satan and his perversion of man brought evil into the world, this great tradition, again, might easily be perverted, under certain conditions of mind, into an evil principle, or a divine author of

evil. When the imagination of man is once taken hold of by the Pantheistic fancy, it is marvellous what it is capable of imagining, and then assuming to be in real existence. For example, the Gnostics imagined such abstract notions as elevation and profundity into real divinities. And the pagans gave a special divinity to every visible object, however vile. Such is the force which imagination may acquire, when it is allowed to rule the light of intelligence.

If from the outward we turn to the inward causes of these fearful errors, we need go no further than those gloomy imaginations stimulated by intellectual pride, in men oppressed by a burdensome sense of evil, who look everywhere except within themselves for the evil cause of their sufferings, and who could not be more flattered than by ascribing their evils to an evil creator, or to some principle of evil beyond their power. Some kind of fatalism beyond the power of the sufferer to remedy, has always had an attraction for gloomy minds that love to brood over their miseries. Nor do such minds want a prompter in the enemy of man. Not to speak of the power of evil spirits over self-absorbed and brooding melancholy, the tempter of mankind has a singular interest in doctrines like these. It was in aiming at self-deification that Satan and his angels fell from good to evil, and their work is to prompt to pride, and to the errors that foster pride in human souls. Especially are they interested in errors that seem to justify evil. When Satan comes upon a soul filled with pride like himself, oppressed with the evils that come of pride, blinded through its influence from all true insight into herself, and looking everywhere for the cause of her miseries except within herself; Satan has only to present himself to the imagination in some secret way, as the author of evil, to obtain that deification which he failed to win by his apostasy from God. Since he first compassed the fall of man, he has obtained two great victories over large portions of the human race; the one has been to get himself deified as the author of evil; the other has been to get his very existence denied as the tempter of man to evil.

In various shapes and under various designations, the doctrine of the origin of evil from an evil principle vexed the Church of God in sect after sect, from her earliest period until the fourteenth century. Perhaps even now the doctrine is secretly maintained

in some form or other among sects and societies opposed to the Church. It would seem as if Satan was ever ambitious of having a church of his own by the side of God's Church, where he may receive homage as the principle of evil, in rivalry with the worship of God. Yet the older philosophies and heresies kept themselves clear of ascribing the authorship of evil to the One God supremely good. It was left to the early Reformers to originate the blasphemous doctrine that the one true God is the author of evil. It followed their denial of human free will as a matter of course. Their contention that the evil of sin, as Luther maintained, was of the very nature of fallen man; or that, as was generally maintained by the early Reformers, it was something inherent in fallen human nature, which is not removed but covered by the justification of Christ, betrays the grossest ignorance of the negative character of evil. These errors most seriously affect their whole teaching as it respects the relations of man with God.*

The doctrine of the Church as opposed to these fundamental errors, is expressed in the Creed of Eugenius IV. for the Jacobites, in the following terms: "The Holy Roman Catholic Church, founded by the voice of our Lord and Saviour, most firmly believes, professes and teaches, that the One True God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, is the Creator of all things visible and invisible, who by His goodness made all things when He willed, both spiritual and corporal; they are indeed good, because they are made by the Supreme Good, but they are changeable, because they are made from nothing. And she asserts that there is no nature of evil, because every nature, in so far as it is nature, is good."†

Whatever is not God must be limited in its nature. There can only be one infinite, eternal, full and complete Being, one Supreme Good that is perfect in every kind of goodness. To suppose the contrary is to put limits to that Supreme Good, and to leave nothing unlimited, not even God Himself. There cannot be another infinite communication of good beyond that of the three Persons in the one life and substance of God. Beyond that divine and internal communication of good, the sphere of limited good alone remains possible. The plan of

* For ample proofs see Möhler's Symbolism.
† Denziger's *Enchiridion*, N. 600.

creation is eternal in the mind of God, and in that plan is the inevitable law of limitation, and of succession in time, which is one of the modes of limitation. It is not therefore the substance but the divine plan of the created universe which is eternal.

The will of the Almighty is the first principle of power, and the cause of all created power. Even the power of the human will is of God, although man has the free use of that power. God created all things good, each according to its kind, degree and measure. He pronounced each order of creation to be "good," and after the whole creation was completed, He proclaimed it to be "very good," thereby affirming that there was nothing evil in His works. Each particular creature is good as far as it exists, and in the measure in which it exists; it is good of its kind. Each creature, again, has more or less of good as it is nearer to or farther from God in resemblance, or shadow of resemblance, to God, who gives substance and form to all good. An intelligent spirit with a will that is the free cause of her own acts, and that is pure and beautiful, is a very great good, because she is not only in the likeness of God, but she receives a divine good from Him. A grain of earth, which has but a rudimental existence of which it is unconscious, has no resemblance beyond that rudimental existence. Yet even that grain of earth is good, and is endowed with capacity for greater good. It may become part of the organization of a plant, and may ultimately become a portion of some human body, animated and ruled by a living soul.

Every creature is good in two ways; in what it is already, and in its capacity of becoming better by the addition of greater good. We shall never understand how much evil is opposed to good, unless we take into account, not only the actual good that evil destroys, but also the greater good which evil prevents the creature from receiving. The making of each creature is but the beginning of its good, then it increases by the addition of more good, and God has provided one good for another with inexhaustible profusion. The law of constant augmenting and ascending good is the law of God's providence. Even the decay of the mortal part of man enters into this law of augmenting good, because it removes obstacles to the enriching of the immortal part. This law of augmenting good reaches its highest fulfilment

whenever a creature is united to the greatest good of which it is capable.

There is a fundamental principle in the order of God's creation that gives the key to the divine plan of His providence. Everything is made for some object and end exterior to itself, in which it finds its greatest good. The higher the order of the creature the greater the end for which it is made, and the nobleness of the creature is derived from the nobleness of the end for which it is made. In estimating good and evil this principle must be ever kept in view. Know the object for which any creature is made, and you will know the good of which that creature is capable, and you will also know the extent of loss and ruin which evil may bring upon it. As intelligent creatures are made for God and He is their final good, the evil which turns them from God deprives them of an infinite good. Material things are also made for God, who "hath made all things for Himself," but they either form a part of man, and so serve God in man, or they serve the uses and pleasures of man, and have their end in him.

The earth of which man's body is formed, reached not its end or greater good, until it was transformed into the body of man. The body of man reached not its end until it was filled and animated by a spiritual soul. The soul reached not even the beginning of her end, until God gave her the supernatural light and grace which begins her communion with God. The soul brought into divine relations with God does not reach the consummation of her good, until advancing by degrees on the way of truth and justice, she reaches the open vision of God, and finds the fulness of good in her beatific union with Him.

The material creatures are placed as veils between God and the soul during her time of trial on this earth. Taken in this light, they are the instruments of trial; and their limits have to be transcended before the mind and heart can rest upon divine things. Passively obedient to the will of God, these visible things are also subject to the will of man. They are not only veils that curtain round the spirit of man, obscuring his vision of the spiritual things that are all about him; but they are also trials in this respect, that he has to exercise himself in the denial of them as well as in the acceptance of them, and that he obtains the greater good in proportion as he refrains his spirit from the quest of them. For the soul cannot ascend above the earth if

she cleaves to the earth, more than the winged bird ; and beyond his material needs, these material things are appointed for man to overcome by strength of will and victory of soul, in his ascent to higher things.

Since the body of man has become mortal through his fall, the soul has grown feebler with the weakness of the body, and the elements of the material world have been made harder and sharper to him as instruments of trial, and that most mercifully, since he is so much weaker in yielding to their seductions. God took away a portion of His blessing from the earth, leaving it prolific in thorns and briars, which is the figure of many like things.

Hence in our short-sighted sensitiveness we often ascribe evils to material things that are not evils, although we make them of evil effect by using them in an evil way. They are appointed for occasions of good, for trials of good, and for helps to good of the everlasting order. They provoke us to the noble virtues of modesty, temperance, patience, fortitude and magnanimity. They are tests to try faith ; opportunities for generous endurance and sacrifice ; prompters to humility ; occasions given to charity to expand her fostering love. The life is more than the body, and the eternal is more than the earthly life ; and every material danger that threatens the body's health or life, is a sharp admonition for us to look to our spiritual life. Pain and suffering are not only salutary admonitions of the presence of danger, but they are sanatory of the soul, and as intermediate good is chiefly valuable as it helps us to our final good, much that the world calls evil is convertible into intermediate good. That cannot be accounted an evil which warns us, where warning is most precious ; nor that which undeceives us, where deception is the great evil ; nor that which makes earth repulsive and Heaven attractive ; nor that which does us the good office of humbling us ; nor that which puts us in the way of better things ; whatever may be the pains, losses or sorrows that are instrumental in doing us so much good. The good things of this life are so far good as they help us towards eternal good, which they more frequently do by the willing privation than by the abundant possession of them.

Enlightened by these principles, we are better prepared to understand what that is which deserves the name of evil. Evil comes of the weakness of the creature. This weakness comes of

its limitations and liability to change; whilst the liability to change is a consequence of this weakness. Man, his properties and powers, are in their nature limited and changeable. A creature made from nothing has the tendency from its origin of inclining to nothingness. The continuance of God's creative might, "upholding all things by the word of His power," alone prevents the creature from returning to that nothing from which it came. But within the soul is the free will, the most moveable, changeable and independent of all created activities, prone to take its own way, drawing the other human powers after it, and but too often taking the downward course below that which is good for human nature. For man, like every other creature, is placed between God and the nothingness from which he came; far beneath God on the one side, he borders on nothingness on the other; so that if God has not united him as yet to His own divine stability, he is still on the verge, at his weak side, of that nothingness, and liable to fall by his own acts, although upheld as to his existence by the creative hand of God.

Another cause of change in the human soul is her union and intimate relations with a body subject to so many kinds of sensuality, and open to so many provocations both external and internal, that attract the will from the superior good of the soul to the inferior things of the body. Another thing that tries the weakness of the soul and exposes her to failure, is the very greatness of her capacity as compared with what she already is in substance or possession. Her chief good is still in great measure external to her, and not within her. Having the appetite for good, and a great capacity for good that is not yet filled, and being always in search of substantial good, when the soul lets her intelligence be blinded by her senses and imagination, she often mistakes the baser things that press upon her for those substantial things for which she was made, and which alone can satisfy her spirit and complete her life. Then the will, in its weakness, descends to things unworthy of its dignity, commits evil, and suffers the pains of evil.

The divine truth reveals to us the good of which we are in search, but is not the substance of that good. The light of the law by which that good is reached is also in the soul, but she is not herself that law. Unless, then, the soul has the foretaste of that Supreme Good in the gift of divine charity, she easily changes her will and inclines herself from spiritual to sensual things, which

have an ally within the weak man in the concupiscence that burns in his earthly frame. The power of divine grace is the true strength of the will, and the counteracting force against the alluring flame of concupiscence; but if the man refuses that grace, or his will refuses to enter into it, and to work with its power, whereby he might conquer all things; if he will neither be faithful nor humble with the divine help: he is himself conquered by his own weakness and inclines his infirm will to his own perversion. This slackness of will, failing from its proper good, and inclining itself to base and unworthy things, is a descending towards nothingness. Here we touch upon the one and only cause of evil. We use the word evil in three senses, each of which is distinct and separate from the other, and it is all important that we keep them distinct and separate in our mind. We speak of natural evil; of moral evil, or sin; and of penal evil, or punishment. Natural evil is nothing but the absence or privation in the individual of some good that belongs to the species. Moral evil, or sin, is the privation or defect of rectitude in the will of an intelligent creature. The evil of punishment is the privation of good because of moral evil or sin. The first kind of evil is nothing but a defect of nature. Sin is a defect or falling off from the will of God. Punishment is a loss of good that is due to the evil will. Of all these evils, in so far as they are evils, the human will is the first cause.

There is no substance of evil, no nature of evil, no positive cause of evil. Evil is always a failure, and the cause of evil is always a failure. Whatever is, is good, but good only in its own kind, its own measure, and its own order. For anything, and especially the human will, to be in its right order, it must be in just and due relations with its greater good. Without this due order it is in disorder, and disorder is evil. Let us give some exemplification of this failure from due order. It has been said that dirt, as the festering cause of disease, is only matter in its wrong place. Leave it about a human dwelling and it will destroy life. Spread it over the land to fertilize the plants and fruits, and it will support life. Good in itself, that dirt is an evil in its wrong place, and a good in its right place. The will of man is good in itself, and good when it adheres to justice, which is the law of right and order; but when the will fails from justice, and sinks down to things that are unjust and disorderly, then the will

becomes evil in its failure, and the cause of evil. It loses its purity, and becomes defiled with sin.

Evil is nothing in fact but the corruption of good. It is a defect, a weakness, a falling off from good, a tending towards nothingness. As evil is always the corrupting of some good that God has made, it is a wasting, a vitiating, a depraving, an undoing of good in some degree, whether less or more. What constitutes the malignity of evil is the wilful corrupting of God's work. To quote St. Augustine's well known definition: "Evil is nothing but the corruption of a species, mode or natural order. An evil nature is therefore a corrupted nature, for a nature that is not corrupted is good. But even a corrupted nature is so far good as it still remains, but it is evil as far as it is corrupted." *

Since evil is the corruption of a good nature, it follows that that nature was good before it was corrupted, and consequently that evil does not come from an evil principle, but out of a nature that was created good. If sin were of nature, that nature would be evil; but all evil works come of an evil will, as bad fruits come of a bad tree that once was good. The evil will of the evil angel was created good, and the evil will of the evil man was created good. Both these evil wills become evil through their own wilful failure from just order and right intentions. As evil originates from the defection of good wills, it follows that all other evils are caused by the corruption of created wills.

It remains to consider whether evil exists in something good or in something evil. But a little reflection will show that evil cannot exist in itself, and that it must have some good nature in which to exist. For as evil is nothing but privation of good, and has no substance of its own, it must be found in some substance that is good, however that substance may be injured by the presence of evil. Sickness is but the privation of health, but it corrupts the body; a wound is but the privation of soundness, but it corrupts the limb. Yet what remains of the body is good, and sickness can only exist in a sick body, as a wound can only exist in a wounded body. Neither sickness nor wounds can exist in themselves, but only in a body. So it is with souls, the vices, which are the wounds and sickness of the soul, are the privation of virtues, and cannot exist of themselves without some good of nature remaining in which they exist. Evil always exists then in

* S. August. *De Civitate Dei*, L. 11. c. 22.

some nature that is good. If evil could destroy that nature, as St. Augustine justly observes, the nature and the evil must perish together. Evil is therefore always mixed with good; being nothing of itself but a failure and defect in soul or body, it corrupts but does not destroy our nature.

St. Augustine justly reproached the Manicheans that, despite of all efforts to imagine to themselves an evil being, or principle, they were compelled to depict a being endowed with good qualities. To their evil principle or god they ascribed life, mind, memory, power, foresight, order, government, and all manner of things in their nature good. With the same keen perception he remarks, in another place, that "we never find fault with anything except for the corruption that is in it. We find fault with what vitiates nature, because it is contrary to the nature that it vitiates; but in finding fault with what vitiates nature, we praise the nature which suffers from that vitiation."*

The distinction between the evil existing in a creature by nature good, and the good still remaining in that nature, is admirably drawn out in the Book on the Divine Names, so long ascribed to St. Dionysius the Areopagite, as exemplified in the fallen angels. Even the devils, he observes, are not evil by nature. If that were the case, they could never have had their existence from the Sovereign Good. Nor could they exist in the nature of things; nor, if always and by nature evil, could they have changed from good to bad. They are not utterly and in all respects evil. Their essential nature has not perished; but they have fallen from the good order of their nature, in which they ought to have remained. They have weakened the harmony and good agreement of their powers into imbecility. They are evil by what they are not, and not by what they are; and because, as the Scripture says, "they have not kept their principality." In what are the devils depraved, except in having ceased to wish and to do good things in their divinely appointed order? They were not, then, always evil, nor are they by nature evil; but they have become evil by failing from the good that is proper to angels. Nor are they altogether devoid of good, since they have being, life, intelligence, and certain movements of desire; but they are depraved because they are weak as to the doing of what properly belongs to their nature.

* S. August. *De Civitate Dei*, L. 11. c. 22.

What is further weak in some fallen spirits, though no in all of them, is a certain irrational fury, a senseless concupiscence and a headlong fantasy. These things are not evil in their nature but in their excess, yet they are evil in them. When they exist in certain animals in their due moderation, to destroy them would be to destroy the nature of those animals. The lion without his fierce impetuosity would cease to be a lion. The dog that fawned on everybody would lose the good properties of a dog; for his natural habit is to guard the house, to admit the members of the family, and to bark away the intruder. We compare the fallen angels with certain animals in a figurative way, as where the Scripture says, that "the devil like a roaring lion goeth about, seeking whom he may devour;" but whatever likens them to bestial qualities is an utter depravation of the angelic nature. In those who have fallen into such utter disorder, the calmness of contemplation has sunk into the weak fury of the passions; the love of the Supreme Good has changed into fiery concupiscence; and the hope and prospect of eternal rest in God has become darkened and closed up by the fantastic spectres of evil projected from their malice, mixed with evils that never end and terrors that never cease.

But whilst the good of their nature is not utterly destroyed, they have fallen from all that good which God gave to their nature. Yet we do not affirm that the endowments of the angelic nature are altogether changed; they are in them, but they cannot see them, because the pride that falsifies them with a fictitious view of themselves, obstructs their sight, and blinds them from seeing the good that still remains in their nature. As far as they exist and desire any good, such as existence, life, or intelligence, they are good; but as far as they have deserted the good belonging to their nature, or the good that perfects their nature, they are evil. But they are evil in what they are not, and in desiring evil, they desire that which is nothing.*

Unjust souls, in like manner, are not evil by nature. They are good in what they are, and in what they have. They are evil by their failure from justice, and by the corruption consequent on that failure. They are depraved by falling from good affections and from good actions; by deserting the Supreme Good for which they were made; and by abandoning the good order which should

* S. Dionys. Areop. *De Divinis Nominibus*, c. iv.

regulate, beautify, and perfect their nature, and lead them onwards to their Supreme Good.

As we have so often used the word corruption to express both what is evil and what comes of evil, we might as well say that we use the word in the sense of disharmonizing, disordering, undoing, or destroying. The word has always a negative sense implying the privation of some good. But the corruption of a nobler nature, such as the human soul, does not make that nature inferior to one less noble, because some elements of that nobler nature always remain, which are superior to that less noble nature. The soul will always be nobler than the body, even though there be corruption in the soul that has not reached the body. The soul that gives life to the body must always be of a better nature than the body to which it gives life, even though evil should have befallen the soul and not the body. Sin begins in the will, and so in the soul, before the acts of sin reach the body and appear in the external man. Moreover the responsibility of sin remains always with the soul, and yet the soul must always remain the nobler part of man because of her nobler nature.

As the evil within us is always a corruption of one's own nature, or of the measure of that nature, or of the due order of that nature; and as this corruption has its first beginning in the laxity or the evil choice of our will; it is evident, as St. Augustine says, that "if all men kept themselves up to the due measure and order of their nature, there would be no evil. But," he adds, "if men will use the good they have in an evil way, even then they cannot conquer the will of God. For God knows how to dispose of the unjust according to justice. If through their unjust will they make an evil use of His good, in the might of His justice God will ordain what those evils deserve. He will ordain them to justice who have ordained themselves to sin."*

Leaving the fuller consideration of moral evil and the evil of punishment to the two following lectures, we will devote what remains of this to the consideration of natural evil.

Natural evil is nothing more than the limitation of that good which belongs to the species in some member of that species. Of every species of creature there is a perfect form, type, or standard of excellence. This type or standard is the perfect species. It is the divine model or ideal upon which the species was created;

* S. August. *De Natura Boni*, c. xxxvi.

and when this species is fully realized in any particular example, it is the most complete form of good in that kind. The highest effort of human art is the attempt to reproduce in marble or on canvas the perfect form of the species. The perfect example of the species embraces every good in the most complete order and harmony that belongs to that sort of creature. It is the standard of good in that kind; but this standard is rarely met with in the actual creation, and is more commonly an ideal of the mind, with which we measure the short-comings that we find in individual examples.

Let us take some familiar example to help our explanation. The horse is a beautiful animal, especially in its finest models; it is not only beautiful in itself, but beautiful in its destination to the use and pleasure of man. The good which it has must be chiefly estimated by this destination. At a horse-show the judges have an ideal in their minds of what is the best horse of its kind in point of size, bone, shape, symmetry, health, strength, spirit, swiftness, beauty and docility. We may take their ideal as the standard of the species in that kind: the horse which approaches nearest to the standard has the greatest amount of good, and is pronounced the best. The horse that fails most from that standard has the least amount of good in him, and is therefore the worst. Yet notwithstanding these defects and failings from the perfection of the species, what is in that horse is good as far as it exists. Even where there are very marked defects, such as blindness, lameness, deformity, or vicious temper, these are but evils in the sense of being defects of sight, soundness, form or temper. But whatever remains of these qualities is good, and what fails is defect of goodness.

There are two great causes for the limitations that are found in every species of creature as compared with their perfect forms or standards of excellence. The first is to be found in that great law of wisdom by which God diversifies His works. The number of individuals in a species is countless. But if all were exact copies of the perfect form and type of the species, there would be nothing to individualize them, nothing to distinguish them from each other. Each would be an exact presentment in all respects of the other, so that we should never know which was which. In place of the rich diversity of creation which gives a difference to every individual, there would be a ridiculous monotony and sameness in

all the members of the species, destructive of the very notion of individuality. But the Divine Artist does not repeat Himself: He varies His work without end, supplying in variety what is wanting in infinitude. He not only diversifies the orders, kinds and species of His creation, but the individuals within the species, soul differing from soul, body from body, and face from face in countless changes upon the same specific form. But this endless diversity of individual creations can only arise from the greater or less degree of good that is given to each, as compared with the perfect type or standard of the species. But where any quality is possessed by one in a less degree than by another, where one has less intelligence, less vigour, or less beauty, we have the beginning of what is called natural evil, which in fact is but a certain limitation of good.

But the great cause of natural evil is the fall of man, and the vast amount of natural evil that appears in the world has been either the direct or the indirect consequence of that fall, the memory of which is so deeply imprinted on the mind of the whole human race, if we except the godless philosophers who have effaced it from their minds by hard and unfruitful labour. This vast amount of natural evil, that is to say, of defective good in the world, bears upon it the character both of punishment and mercy. As everything in this world was made for man, and as man himself is the object and end of all that is in the world, we must expect, in the order of that divine providence which guides all things to their use and destiny, that when man underwent so great a change for the worse, all things destined for his use or pleasure would undergo a change adapted to his altered position. Not to expect such a change would argue a very poor notion of that Eternal providence of God, which in its free and constant action in the world, adapts all things both little and great to those final ends for which they were created. The fall was the great crisis of the world as well as of the human race, a crisis incomparably greater than that which brought about the deluge. The earth was changed that man might have to toil in the sweat of his brow, and that the toil might be the medicine of his soul as well as of his mortal body. Man lost his immortal life, and all creatures suffered a weakening of their good.

Even since the fall, there has been so much wilful deviation in human nature from order and rectitude, and for so long a time,

that in a thousand ways men have been unfaithful to themselves through their unfaithfulness to God. They have weakened their natures by the conduct of their wills, by the abuse of their minds, by the corrupting of their senses, and by the immoderate excess of their impulses and appetites. From all this there has come a prodigious amount of disorder, that is, of the defect of that good which properly belongs to human nature. By continuance and contact this disorder increases with endless complication and entanglement. What a number of disorders affecting health and life spring from that crowded and harassing civilization, that artificial and complicated life, in which the few are exalted and the multitude degraded. What a variety of deformities and corporal defects take their rise from the conditions of certain kinds of labour. Yet this state of things is the work of human wills.

Then the poverties and defects of human bodies descend to their offspring, and we have only to watch the transmission of corporal defects and disorders from parents to children from generation to generation, often originally contracted from moral causes, to find confirmation of the transmission of original evil from Adam to his race. And though parents but transmit their corporal limitations, defects and dispositions, in one way or another, yet as the body is the prison of the soul, and the instrument she must use in her thoughts, feelings, and actions, the soul herself suffers contraction and limitation in the exercise of her powers, through her intimate connection with the body, and because the soul acts not in this life without the tie of corporal influences. The corporal weaknesses and disorders which their own folly and excess have contracted, is one of the most fearful responsibilities of parents. So obvious are these and many similar things to reflecting minds, that it is easy to understand how the great amount of natural evil has had its origin in human wills, unfaithful to the good of their nature.

The good we have in this world is a relative good ; our absolute good is our final end. When, therefore, we come to estimate the final value of the good we have from this world we must take another standard than its actual amount ; for our present good can only be considered valuable as a means to bring us to our final and everlasting good. But what kind and what amount of natural good in this world will best help us to obtain our final good, can only be perfectly known to God, who sees all things in

all their bearings on each other, from the beginning to the end of time. It was the very greatness of his natural gifts that prompted Lucifer, one of the noblest of created spirits, to take pride in himself and to aspire beyond himself, whereby he lost his final good and fell into ruin. So has it fared with many of God's intelligent creatures, who have received strong or beautiful bodies, and with many who have received the noblest qualities of soul. Had they been less gifted with natural good, they might have been less sensual, less proud, less vain, less presuming. More humble with humbler gifts, they might have been happier in this world, and have reached eternal happiness. Great gifts require a great grace to guide them; but a great grace can only consist with a great humility, and great powers of nature and possessions of natural good, are not held and used with humility, unless there be something like heroic virtue. The possession of great natural good is too apt to draw the affections upon their possessor; and the constant comparison with less gifted persons that is forced upon the more gifted, swells that self-estimation, which degenerates into self-love; so that the love which is due to God and to eternal things, is given to self and to self-surroundings. But this is that spiritual injustice that leads to spiritual ruin.

How many persons, on the other hand, have had reason to be eternally grateful that their natural good was limited, and that this kept them humble and disposed them for the reception and good use of their supernatural gifts. Abiding in their simplicity, they have been more drawn to God and less to themselves, thanks to those very limitations which the divine providence ordained for them, and so they have ascended to the possession of the everlasting good.

A deformed and sickly body may be taken as an example of natural evil; yet, as if in compensation, it often lends itself to an acute and sensible mind. Novalis maintained, with some truth, that the mind seldom gets its full power in a strong and vigorous body. Human life is full of these compensations. A deformed and sickly body is nevertheless a serious limitation of natural good, but such limitations often become the occasion of a detachment from the good of this life, that brings the soul to seek superior good of the highest order. Each one has a given amount of spiritual power, which is commonly expended out of all just proportion upon the body to the detriment of the soul,

but when the body is less attractive and less flattering in promise, when it becomes an affliction rather than a solace, the man who is loyal to his superior part, will more easily detach his soul from his body, and fix his affections on the better things. Loosening his spirit from his frail mortality, which gives him less food for vanity, he can more readily attach himself to eternity, and make his natural poverty the means of enriching himself with spiritual good. He may thus exchange his natural deformity for a spiritual beauty, and his sickness for a health and fulness of life, that shall last for ever, and be the more enjoyed for the suffering from which he has emerged. It does not follow, however, that a greater natural good is not better in itself, and better even relatively, if rightly used and wisely directed to the final good. But all good in this world is relative to our final good, and God alone knows who will be saved with a greater amount of natural good, and who will only be saved with a less amount of that relative good.

With respect to the goods of fortune, nothing can be more certain than that many are better and happier without them, than they would be with them; and that many are saved without them who would not be saved with them. Attachment to them, or the restless desire of them, is a great weakening of the soul: detachment from them, is the test and proof of spiritual strength. He but little knows those goods, but little knows the dignity of his own soul, and has no great strength of faith, who does not understand that the gifts of fortune are more given to be denied and sacrificed for the growth of the soul in generosity, than given to be appropriated to personal use and self-aggrandizement. For we are called to be the co-operators of God's providence, and the imitators of his divine bounty, in distributing that good which he accumulates in the hands of some for the benefit of many. Yet they become the perilous occasion of dangerous temptations, not only to pride and selfishness, which are the roots of all evil, but to every vice to which they lend the means. There is but one principle of conduct that can make them safe, and that is to act as the stewards of God in using them as though we used them not. Privation therefore of earthly goods is so far from being an evil with respect to man's final good, that by the divine disposition it is often the certain means of securing our final good.

But with regard to the limitation of natural good, although some receive less and some more, those who have received less have

received no evil or wrong. They have received nothing but what is good, and have no right by any title to more than they have received. Putting aside every envy and complaint as injurious to ourselves as well as to justice, each one of us may say with the Prophet Isaias: "And now, O Lord, thou art our Father, and we are clay: Thou art our Maker, and we all are the work of Thy hands." Or, with St. Paul, we may ask ourselves the question: "O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, why hast thou made me thus? Or, hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

We have seen far into the providence of God, when we come to understand how many who abound in natural good make it the cause of losing their supreme good, and how many who are poor in natural good make it the cause of seeking their eternal good. Yet when great natures devote themselves to cultivate their gifts and powers in the direction of the Supreme Good, it is wonderful how much they accomplish, both for the honour of God and the good of mankind. Still the great number who are highly gifted, waste themselves in vain, either in mental pursuits that begin and end in this world, or in an ambition that looks not to God as its end, or in pleasures that expend the body and degrade the soul.

Secure in the divine profundity of his sense, St. Paul has ventured upon a bold audacity of speech. He calls that divine conduct which exalts the weak and poor of this world to the eternal good the "weakness," and the "foolishness" of God. The Apostle would give a shock to our fastidious pride, and would open our eyes with his irony to see the utter disproportion of natural good to that universal good to which men are called, and to which humility and poverty help us to aspire. To the weak pride of foolish mortals, this disproportion between man's natural good and God's divine good, is unintelligible. They secretly imagine that what is great in their eyes, is great in the eyes of God, although God judges the value of men, not by their natural gifts, but by their inward motives. "For," says the Apostle, "the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men. For see the vocation, brethren, in which you are called, that there are not many wise according to

the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble: but the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise: and the weak things of the world, and the things that are contemptible, and the things that are not, that He might bring to nought the things that are: that no flesh should glory in His sight." Briefly, the Almighty shows by his choice of souls that the wisdom, power, and wealth of this world are as nothing in his sight; that He lifts up the humble and puts down the proud; that He keeps those to their divine destiny who are subject to Him and resist not His will; whilst the self-sufficient, who will not enter into His ways, must needs be left to their downward course among the shallows of created things that verge on nothingness.

We cannot better conclude this lecture than with one of those large views of the ways of God to man, which the saints have seen in their ecstatic contemplations. Hearken, then, to what St. Catherine of Sienna learnt of the providence of God in contracting the limits of our natural good. God speaks to her soul in light, and like the prophets, St. Catherine puts that light into human terms. To adapt the instruction to this lecture, I shall translate her words from the first person to the third:—

"Behold in His providence God has fitted the second world to the changed condition of man! No sooner has he fallen from his first condition, than the world produced the thorns of many tribulations, and in everything he found rebellion. This did not come to pass without a providential intention for our good. With a great providence directed to our service, God changed the world from a place of pleasure, that its ever returning troubles might take off man's trust from the world, might repel his heart and affections from it, and cause him to rise to better things, and to hasten to the God who is the true end of his desires. So ignorant is man, and so prone to cast his affections down into the world, that notwithstanding all the thorns and toils that meet him there, he seems unwilling to rise above the world, and to care for his true country. What then would have been his case, had he found a world of perfect delight and rest, free from pain and sorrow? But God has ordained it in His providence, that this world should be a scene of many tribulations, both to exercise the virtues of men, and to secure them the reward of whatever pains they endure, and of whatever violence they do themselves.

"The wealth of God is infinite. He made all things, and nothing exists without Him. If we desire beauty, He is beauty. If we desire good, He is goodness, and the Good Supreme. He is wisdom He is the benignant, the just, the merciful God. He is large in bounty, and never avaricious. He gives to them who ask, opens His truth to them who seek, and answers them who call upon Him. He is not ungrateful, but quick to reward them who labour for the praise and glory of His Name. He is full of delight, and He holds those in His delight who are clothed with His will. He is Himself that good providence which never fails His servants that rely on Him for their wants of soul and body.

"When one sees how God fosters the poor worm in the dry wood; how He feeds the birds of the air, the beasts of the field, and the fishes in the sea; how He makes His sun to shine on the plants, and gives the dew to fatten the earth; can we doubt that He will cherish the creature that He made to His own image and likeness? Let that creature know that God in His goodness made all those things for his service. Turn himself where he will, to spiritual or to temporal things, and man will find nothing that comes not from the burning charity of God in a great, sweet, and perfect providence. But because his light is dimmed, he neither sees nor cares to see; he is scandalized, shuts up his charity against his neighbour, and avariciously thinks of to-morrow. Yet the Very Truth forbade us to do this, and said: 'Take not thought for to-morrow; sufficient for the day is the evil thereof.' He taught us to seek the kingdom of God and His justice, which is a good and holy life; but as to these least of things, our heavenly Father knoweth that we have need of them, and He made them for us, and commanded the earth to bring us its fruits.

"But the miserable man who narrows his heart into mistrust of God, and withholds his charity from his neighbour, has never truly read this doctrine of the Eternal Truth, because he does not follow it. He grows intolerable to himself, for all evil comes upon us from trusting to one's self, and not in God. Men like these presume to judge what God alone can judge; they do not know the will of God, because they judge nothing to be good except the propensities, delights, and gratifications of this world. Their hope and their affections are set upon them, and when they fail, these men think that they have none of the good providence of

God over them, but are stripped of all that is good. Blinded with their passion for natural and external good, they know nothing of the wealth of the soul, nor of the profit of patience: their temporal loss is death to them, so that even in this life they have a foretaste of hell. Yet God provides for the sinners as for the just, and makes His sun to shine and His rain to fall upon their field, sometimes even more than on the possession of the just man.

"In His goodness God does this, that He may be more bountiful in spiritual wealth to the soul of the just man, and especially to him who despoils himself of temporal things, who surrenders the world and its pleasures, and gives up his will to God. Such as these forget the care of themselves, and become rich and great in the heights of divine charity. God Himself then becomes their provider and governor both spiritually and temporally, and beyond His general providence He puts forth a special providence on their behalf, and the Holy Spirit serves them with a loving condescension. Look, for example, at that holy solitary of whom we read in the Lives of the Saints, who had left all things for the sake of God. In his helpless infirmity God sent an angel to provide for his needs, who both relieved his corporal wants, and refreshed his soul with the sweet delight of heavenly conversation. Like a mother feeding her child from her breast, did the Holy Spirit nourish him with the good of divine charity. He was delivered from the bondage of self-love, and set free as though he were made a lord. The Holy Spirit became his providence, clothing, feeding, and inebriating him with spiritual delight. After giving up all things, he found all things; after despoiling himself of perishable goods, he was invested with eternal goods. He became the servant of all humility, and that made him the master of the world and of his sensual nature. With his mind turned from the world he entered into the perfect light; and after despairing of good in himself, he was crowned with living faith, and tasted of that eternal life in perfect hope that knows no pain or bitterness. As he judged all things by the will of God, he judged them well; and he knew in the light of faith that God willed nothing whatever for him but sanctification, which gave him all the strength of patience.

"Oh, how blessed is that soul that in a mortal body partakes immortal good! A soul like this holds everything in reverence, on the left side as well as on the right; whether it bring tribulation

or consolation; whether it bring hunger and cold or food and comfort; whether it bring honour or dishonour; whether it bring affliction or refreshment of soul. As a soul like this is founded on the living rock, she stands firm and solid in all that occurs, knowing by faith, and assured by hope, that God provides whatever we stand in need of with an equal regard to our salvation. Where there is a great strain of toil or suffering, He gives proportionate strength to endure. He lays no heavier weight upon us than our will is able to carry with love for His sake. He has made it known in His own blood that He wills not the death of the sinner, but that he may be converted and live. But whilst the whole providence of God is directed to the service of the souls and bodies of His rational creatures, His providence over the body aims at the good of the soul, that she may grow in the light of faith, and may rise higher in the hope of God, and may give up her trust in herself, and may know and see that God is all things to us; who both can and will help us in whatever is helpful to our salvation."*

* S. Catherine of Sienna, *Della Divina Providenza*, c. xiv.

LECTURE VIII.

ON JUSTICE AND MORAL EVIL.

"If thou do well, shalt thou not receive? But if ill, shall not sin be forthwith at the door?"—GENESIS iv. 7.

THE fatherly remonstrance addressed by the Almighty to the firstborn child of Adam, whilst he was yet brooding in his wounded pride, and in the angry swelling of his soul against his unoffending brother, shows that to sin or not to sin is in the power of the human will. How can God be the cause of that evil which He forbids, rebukes and punishes? In the kingdom of man the will is the sovereign power; God created that power, but He created it to act freely from itself, and to be a principle of causation. In creating the will of each rational creature, He gave to that will the free prerogative of originating its own acts, and left it free in the choice of actions, free to act or not to act, free to act in one direction or its opposite, without any compulsion or coercion from any external cause. Having once given to His created image the noble gift of freedom, He neither recalls, nor violates, nor destroys that freedom. But He presents His truth to enlighten the will, and His law to guide it to the way of justice, and His grace to strengthen its power, and to enable it to ascend to the divine good for which it was created.

Evil is opposed to good as non-existence is opposed to existence. To understand moral evil, therefore, we must first understand moral good. Real good is substantial good; moral good is the rule of conduct that leads us to substantial good. It is that conduct of the soul which disposes and prepares us for the reception of our real good, "If thou do well, shalt thou

not receive?" But moral evil disorders the soul, and unfits her for her real good. "But if ill, shall not sin be forthwith at the door?"

Man is a moral being because he is intelligent and free, and because he is made for a good that is greater than himself. He is a moral being because he is made for the Supreme Good, and has a multiplicity of faculties and powers that have to be harmonized and regulated with respect to that good. He is a moral being because he is subject to the order, law, and rule of that good, made known to him in the light of truth. The principle of that moral order is the universal justice that gives to God what is due to God, to our own nature what is due to our nature, and to every creature what is due to that creature. As St. John Chrysostom often remarks, this universal justice embraces all the virtues. The just man, so often spoken of in the Scriptures, is the man who keeps all the commandments and fulfils the whole law of God.

Moral evil, on the contrary, is the disorder of injustice, which either diminishes or destroys the order of moral good. As moral good, which is the rectitude of the will, prepares us to receive our real good; moral evil, which is the disorder of the will, is the cause of our losing our real good. Wherever justice comes, it reconciles all things, and brings them into harmony; but where injustice comes, it dissolves the peace and concord of things. The unjust man of the Scriptures, is the man who fails from the divine law that regulates all good.

The fountain of justice is the bosom of God. The light that illuminates the law of justice is implanted by God in the mind and conscience of man. The subject of justice is the free will of man, by which it is exercised according to the light of justice in the mind and conscience. These three points will each require a separate consideration.

As an attribute of His divine nature, the justice of God is high and unsearchable. It is as far in perfection above that law of justice which is revealed for the conduct of us mortals, as the divine nature is above the most enlightened of creatures. The justice therefore by which God is just, is altogether different from the justice by which man is just, even though the justice of man is a partaking of the justice of God. Justice in God

is the absolute order of all the good that He is. If we consider the attributes of God as they are one with the divine nature, justice is the perfect unity, equality, and harmony between them. If we consider the three Divine Persons in God, justice is the perfect equality that exists between them. As the Eternal Wisdom is the law of Eternal Justice, and the Divine will its active principle, the Divine justice is the perfect equality of the Divine will with the Divine wisdom. God is justice as He is truth, and as He is goodness, and His justice is the perfect order of His truth and goodness. Justice, in a word, is the true and sovereign beauty of God's infinite and eternal virtue.

When we pass from the justice which God is to the justice that He imparts to His creatures, we must again say, that the justice of God is not as the justice of man; God owes nothing to any creature, but every creature owes all things to God. The justice of God is not therefore commutative but distributive; commutative justice belongs to the intelligent creature, and consists in giving to God what is due to Him, and to every creature what is their due, honour to whom honour, obedience to whom obedience, love to whom love, and right to whom right is owing. But the distributive justice of God is, first, what He owes to Himself, and to His eternal plans, which He completes with a generous bounty; then it is the just proportion that is due, according to His promise, to good and evil, dealing with the good according to its merits, and with the evil according to its deservings.

When Consentius put the question to St. Augustine: How can God be the self-subsisting justice, since justice lives in us, and is that by which we live? The great Doctor replied, in substance, as follows: The life by which all spirits live must be self-subsistent; for even souls that are dead from the loss of justice have yet a life tnat endures for ever, although the true life of the soul, the life of her life, is justice. But if souls cannot live except with a life of their own, upon which the body also lives, how much more must that true justice have a self-subsisting life, from which all souls live, and so live that they who are deprived of that life are accounted to be dead, even though they still have a certain kind of life. But that self subsisting life is certainly God, whose life is unsearchable. And that life of God, which is self-subsisting, is made life to us when

we partake of it; so, also, is that self-subsisting justice made justice to us when, through adhering to that justice, we live justly, and become more or less just as we cleave more or less to that justice. But it is obvious that the Supreme God is that true and supreme justice; and that when, in this our pilgrimage, we hunger and thirst after justice we obtain that justice; and in the eternal life we shall be satiated with that justice. Let us not imagine that God is like our justice, but rather reflect that the more just we are, the more we are like to God by partaking of His justice.*

The Psalmist sings that God worketh justice, and that His right hand is full of justice; this is the justice that God renders to Himself, in completing and perfecting His works according to His plans. St. Thomas says that the justice of God is truth, because whatever He ordains He fulfils. Take this justice away and the world would perish, for all things subsist from the order that is in them; God wills that order, and the order that He wills is His justice; He wills to complete His works according to His eternal plan: this He owes to no creature, but it is His justice to the truth of His own eternal plan. When an artist forms a great design in his own mind, and then leaves its lines incomplete and its colouring defective, it is not to his work but to himself that he is unjust. God has poured such a wonderful affluence upon His works that He may do justice to His own eternal designs. When the Psalmist compares the eternal justice to the mountains of God, and to a deep abyss, he adds, by way of exemplifying that justice: "Thou preservest both man and beast." Not because this justice is due to them, but because it is due to His own eternal plan.

In commenting on the words of the Psalm: "Thy praise is unto the ends of the earth, Thy right hand is full of justice," St. Chrysostom thus enlarges upon this order of divine justice: "Thy praise worketh such great, resplendent, high, wonderful and glorious things. For it is not in a measured way that Thou carest for them whom Thou dost benefit, nor dost Thou look to their deservings, but all is for the sake of Thine own magnificence. . . . . What is of God's nature is one with His substance, and what is that? The Psalmist tell us: 'Thy right hand is full of justice;' showing that what God does for the benefit of

* S. August. *Epist.* cxx., *ad Consentium.*

His creatures is not due to their merits, but to His own substance; for His substance delights in justice, and rejoices in benignity and clemency. This is His work, this is His way, from which He draws so many benefits. As it is the nature of fire to warm, and of the sun to shine, so is it the nature of God to do good, and to do incomparably more good than we can understand; and therefore it is said: 'Thy right hand is full of justice,' to express the affluence of good that flows from His substance."*

The distributive justice of God gives gifts to His creatures in the order and proportion which accords with His free bounty and generous mercy. This has been admirably explained in the Book on the Divine Names. "God's justice is exalted," says that luminous writer, "because He distributes to all things what is suitable to the character of each, and imparts to each its becoming measure, beauty, order and proportion. He determines the kinds of things, with their due distributions, according to the most just bounds and limits that are proper to each of them; and He is the Author to all of the action proper to each of them, for the Divine Justice regulates all things, keeping them from being mingled and confounded with one another, and giving to all what is befitting to each."†

God learns nothing from His creatures; He knows them all in their nature and qualities in the Divine Word of His wisdom before He produces them. He beholds all the diversities of things in their original plans, as they exist before Him, in their eternal forms or ideas. He beholds their various degrees of good and perfection, and the relations and dependencies in which they stand towards Himself, and towards each other, as He has ordained them, and as in the nature of things they ought to be. These just and due relations of things with God and with each other constitute their essential order. And this essential order of things is what we call their eternal law, and their unchangeable rule, and what, in the nature of things, is right and just. And the light which shines from this essential order into our minds, making known to us the just and due relations of things toward God, and towards each other, is what we call right reason, and unchangeable everlasting truth, and the justice of things.

* S. J. Chrysost. *Expos. in Psalm* xlvii.

† S. Dionys. Areop. *De Divinis Nominibus*, c. viii.

According to that eternal law God loves Himself with a necessary love as He is the supreme good in Himself, and the good of all things; and He loves all that He beholds in His creatures according to the good that is in each and its nearer resemblance to Him. When agreeing with that unchangeable rule of justice, everything is just and in its proper place, and is treated according to its deservings, and receives what is proper for it. And when we conform our wills to this essential order and rule of justice, our will is made just, and we value and love all things according to their worth; and from this essential order of the just relations of things all spirits obtain their knowledge and love of justice.

We are made reasonable by partaking of the light of that essential order and right reason of things, which gives us the knowledge and love of the true and just order of things, and of the rules of conduct that spring from them. And this reason is called universal reason, or common sense, because it is common to all rational creatures. But the foundation of this reason is that unchangeable and everlasting truth in which God beholds the just order and the essential relations of all things in His own eternal Mind; and it is only as God beholds them that what is true is true, and what is just is just. But God beholds the whole just and true order of things in His own eternal light, in their original forms or patterns as they exist before Him. And of this light He has given us a certain created participation in our reason, which is a pale and limited reflection or shadow of His own light, truth and justice; and in this light of reason we see the principles of natural truth reflected as well as the order and law of natural justice. But the man of faith receives the light of divine truth, given more directly to him as a supernatural gift and grace, whereby he holds with the firm conviction of faith, which the power of grace can alone explain, whatever truth God has revealed above the order of nature and the natural scope of the understanding. With that divine truth the man of faith receives also the light of the order and law of supernatural justice, by whose guidance the faithful will is brought into the subjection of humility and the union of charity with God.

No one has explained this light of truth and justice, as God has implanted it in the human soul, with more admirable clearness than St. Augustine; but we must use his language with studied brevity. That true interior justice which comes not of human custom, but is derived from the most just law of the Omnipotent God, is the

light that forms the manners of the nations according to their times and conditions. The laws change, but justice does not change; only the change in the conditions of things requires that the same unchangeable justice shall be secured by changing the laws to suit the change of things.* It is not the voice of man that gives us to understand the truth, but the truth itself present to our mind, the voice of the teacher only directs our attention to that truth which is within us. What we really consult and what truly teaches us, is the unchangeable virtue and wisdom of God; yet that truth and justice is only open to each one according to the good or evil disposition of his will. It is no fault in the sun's light when we fail to see what is present before our eyes; and it is no fault of God's truth when we fail to see the truth and justice that are present in our mind.†

The sun shines upon the blind man as well as upon him who has sight, yet one sees and the other does not, because although the light is present with the blind man, he is absent from the light. Truth and wisdom are everywhere present, for they were looked upon by the men of past times, and are looked upon by men in every place at this present time; for that justice which I see myself here at this moment, is the same justice that other men saw in distant times, and which other men see at this very time in places most distant from me. Their souls are united with the same justice with which my soul is united. Thus the light of justice is its own evidence and bears its own witness to the eye of every soul that is well disposed. Is this light of justice present to unbelievers? Undoubtedly it is present, but their eye is not open to receive it. For, as the Gospel says: "The light shone in darkness, but the darkness did not comprehend it."‡

No one will deny that what is incorruptible is better than what is corruptible; or that what is eternal is better than what is temporal; or that what is inviolable is better than what can be violated. Nor will any one deny that we ought to turn our soul away from corruption, and to seek what is incorruptible; or that a life which no adversity can move from its fixed and honest purpose, is better than one that is easily broken down by temporal disadvantages. But whoever confesses this to be the truth, must also confess that this truth is unchangeable, and is common to all who are able to see it;

* S. August. *Confess.* L. iii. c. 7. † Id. *De Magistro*, c. 11. n. 38.
‡ Id. *Tract.* 34 *in Joan.*

and that there are lights and rules of the virtues which are true and fixed, and present to all who look on them and reflect upon them, and that they are present to everyone's mind and reason. But they belong to justice and wisdom, and when we turn to them and accept them, and refuse to let fear or suffering turn us from them, we act justly and wisely. The more we direct our life upon these rules of justice and lights of wisdom, the more truly and wisely we live, nor can it be said that we are in a state of separation from justice and wisdom. They are as fixed and unchangeable as the laws and rules of numbers, which no one thinks of disputing, and which are equally common to all who contemplate them.*

The prophet says to God: "Thy law is truth." The law of God is truth because it represents the essential order and the just relations of things as they are seen in God. This truth is the law of all rational creatures, because it presents to them that just and right order of things which is justice; and this truth, this justice, this law which is the rule of justice, is the regulator of the will and of the love of every reasonable creature through its action in the conscience. But when the love of the will is regulated, the whole life of man is regulated; for as Christ has taught us, all the commandments are directed to the regulation of our love. This is also expressed in the Canticles, where the bride says of the bridegroom—the loving soul of the loving God: "He hath set charity in order within me." For this charity is the perfect order of justice, in which God is justly loved above and before all things, with the whole mind, heart and soul; and all things else are loved in God and for God, according to their goodness, worth, dignity and nearness to God. To love myself therefore in God and for God, is the just and perfect order of loving myself; and my neighbour cannot complain if I love him in God and for God, because it is the most perfect love that I can give him.

Nothing can teach me my true position; nothing can reveal to me the true condition of my heart; nothing can enlarge my moral being, and lift my will into a just, virtuous and happy condition, with so much effect, as to meditate upon and to penetrate into the law of justice which God has implanted in my reason or revealed to my faith. To inspire us with the love of

* S. August. *De Libero Arbitrio*, L. ii. c. 10.

that eternal justice, the Holy Spirit inspired that magnificent Psalm which is the 118th in the Psalter. It is a continuous creed alternating with continuous prayer, in which we cleave with faith to the law of Divine justice, and ask for light to understand, and grace to perfect in ourselves the law, the will, and the justice of God. It is not therefore without a profound reason that this Psalm is distributed into the three daily hours of the Church. A few sentences of it, in example, will give the burden of the whole: "Blessed are the undefiled in the way, who walk in the law of the Lord." "Give me understanding, that I may learn Thy law." "How have I loved Thy law, O Lord; it is my meditation all the day long." "Teach me goodness, discipline and knowledge; for I have believed Thy commandments."

But I shall rise to the majesty and magnificence of the law that God has revealed to my mind, and made sensible to my conscience; I shall rest in security upon its immovable solidity, when I realize to myself that this law and rule of my life is an imparted reflection of that unchangeable order, and that substantial and eternal justice which God is. "Fashion no idols to yourself," says St. Augustine, "banish from your mind all phantoms, all images and pictures of your imagination, and you will find that God is justice." Hence the Scripture says: "Thy justice is everlasting; and Thy law is truth."

The will of man is the subject of that law of justice, whose light is in the mind, and whose guidance is offered to the will. It is essential therefore, both to the knowledge of self and to the knowledge of good and evil, that we should understand precisely what the will is.

The will, then, is the central and sovereign power of free action in the soul, whereby the man holds the possession and disposal of himself, and rules and directs all the faculties and powers of his manhood. Yet though the will is sovereign over the man, and free in the exercise of that sovereignty, it is always responsible to God. If it be asked whence comes the power of the will? We have already stated that it comes from God who created it, and gave it the power to act freely. But if it be asked whence comes the freedom of that power, and the freedom of choosing its motives and objects? We must answer that this freedom of use and of choice comes from the will itself. The will itself is the

cause both of its choosing freely and of its acting freely, and of its refusing to act.

When we consider the human will more closely, we find in it three elements, each of which requires a separate consideration; these are the appetite of the will, the power of the will, and the movement of the will.

In the depth of the soul and essence of the will, there is a sense and an appetite that moves us to seek good and to avoid evil. This is the fundamental sense and appetite of man, to which, when it is in just order, every other appetite is subordinate. It is not the appetite for low and sensual good, but a spiritual appetite for universal good. This appetite, as Suarez observes, is not a special but a general appetite; it is the natural appetite for that good for which man was ordained. This appetite comes not of knowledge, or of choice, but of nature, and has the good of the creature for its object. But although it comes not of knowledge, yet this vital appetite follows knowledge, because the intelligent creature seeks her own good, and employs the means for reaching that good. But she does this in virtue of that general sense or appetite for good which is in the root of the soul and of the will. But this appetite confesses by its very existence that it belongs to an imperfect being, and expresses the wants of that being.* In a word it is the great void in our capacity for universal good craving to be filled.

St. Athanasius therefore defines the will as "the appetite of a rational and intelligent substance for that which sweetly affects the soul."† And St. John of Damascus calls it "the rational and vital appetite proceeding from nature."‡ But this appetite is dim and undefined until it is enlightened by truth which reveals the good of which we are in search. The more the soul possesses of partial good, the more her appetite grows for greater good, nor will she ever be satisfied with less than perfect good; and the reason is that we are moved by appetites that seek universal good, as the reason why we seek universal good is because we are made for God.

How then are we to explain the appetite for evil? The fact is that there is no appetite for evil, either in human nature or in any

* Suarez, *De Anima*, L. v. c. 3. n. 7.

† S. Athanasius, *De Definitionibus*, s. 7.

‡ S. Joan Damascen, *De Fide Orthodox*, c. 2. *De Voluntate.*

other nature. Plato observed, long ago, that no man desires evil to himself, but only good. And Seneca observed that no man sees the evil that he is actually doing in his own soul. The wicked man deceives himself with the pretence of good whilst he is doing evil. The appetite for good is deluded and cheated by a combination of self-love and imagination to mistake evil for good. A baser appetite is permitted to arise and to darken the appetite of the soul for universal good, and deludes itself with the appearance of good, although it proves to be evil; and the self-deluded will accepts the cheat, and in its weakness is generally not unwilling to be deceived, and to look at the pretence of good whilst doing evil. But the appetite for good never accepts evil, except under the appearance of good; it rejects open evil as its enemy. There is always a false motive accepted by the will when it does evil. The reason of good, be it true or false, gives the motive to the appetite and the loving power of the will; and when we truly love good, we love it both for its own sake and for our own. But when we love evil, under the delusive appearance of good, it is to satisfy some base appetite or passion of our own. "But we love our Divine Creator," observes Suarez, "as the universal good of all things, and therefore as our good; and for this reason a soul that is in charity loves God more than she loves herself, because our good is included in the God we love as in its original fountain."*

But the appetite for good is rather the spring of the will than the will itself. It is one thing to have an appetite, another to set the will in motion; one thing to feel desire, another to act upon that desire.

The power of the will, considered apart from its action, is its vital force, its virtue, or capacity for action. This power is either the natural force of the soul, which is increased by habitual exercise and discipline, or it is the natural force exalted, increased, and augmented by the divine gift of supernatural force, given by God to the same soul for gaining its supernatural ends. The one is God's gift in the order of nature, the other is God's gift in the order of grace. The spiritual appetite for good is the chief element of that power, and the power is increased with increase of appetite and desire. What is this appetite but desire? There are many souls, before the world contaminates them, that suffer inexplicable desires that are vague and undefined in their objects,

* Suarez, *Ibid.*

simply because faith has never taught them what is the true object of their spiritual appetite, and what is the final end of this immense desire.

But the power of the will is one thing, the act of willing is another. The will as it is active is the free and uncompelled movement of the soul, either to an object or from an object, with a view to some end. The end proposed is the motive of the will, and the reason why the will acts. We must consider the soul as perfectly simple in herself, but as having her sense enlightened by truth and by the law of justice, and as having the appetite of good within her. The will, then, moves with affection towards the good, or the seeming good, that the mind presents. But if the mind presents evil, or seeming evil, the will withholds its movement or moves away from it. This we call hatred, which moves the will from evil, as love moves it towards good. But when the hatred becomes active, it seeks to punish, weaken, or destroy that in which the evil is, or in which the seeming evil appears to be.

To understand the motives upon which the will acts, we must carefully distinguish between the immediate motive and the final motive that the will has in view. For the immediate good is justly ruled by the final good, and the one is loved for the sake of the other. If you deny yourself some present indulgence for the sake of your general health, you find it good to refuse the present good for the sake of a greater good. If you refuse the same indulgence for the sake of temperance, your motive is the good of the soul. If you do an act of justice, you do it for the immediate motive of acting justly, but you may have the final motive of honouring and imitating the justice of God. You help your suffering fellow-creature, this is your immediate motive, but you have the final motive of loving God in your neighbour, and thus what would be natural benevolence on the first motive becomes charity from its final motive.

It is well to have a clear and compact remembrance of this, which sensual people seem never to understand, that when two goods are offered to our choice, the order of justice requires that we choose the greater good and leave the less. This is the law of self-denial. Again, when two motives present themselves for one and the same action, the law of excellence requires that we put our will and intention to the higher motive. For the ultimate

motive exalts and enriches all the intermediate motives with its own value, and makes every mediate good a step towards our final good. In dealing with intermediate good, the perfect soul, following the light and order of justice, subjects all lower motives to the motive of the love of God, which she contemplates as the highest law of justice in all her acts.

But besides the light of God's truth and justice, which illuminate the soul and give motives to the will, there are other elements to be considered in the management of the will. The soul is invested with a body of which she is the animating principle. She is the subject of all the corporal senses, appetites, and passions, and through them she holds much converse with the external, visible, and sensible word. All these objects external to the soul, with their movements and sensibilities, become internal to the soul through the imagination, which, through its union with the intellectual light of the soul, if not well controlled and regulated, will obtain a prodigious power of exaggerating lesser good, and of magnifying that lesser into the appearance of greater good, by adding to it ideas from the mind that do not belong to it. The ill-regulated imagination, stimulated by passion, confounds the pure truth in the mind with its own representations, and makes that to be true which is untrue, that to be just which is unjust, and that to be good which is evil. When the imagination is well regulated, it is a grand and beautiful power, interpreting the external world of sense to the mind, and through the mind to the will; and illustrating and giving colour and interest to the inward truth and justice derived from the communicated light of God. But if the will suffers the imagination to rule the intelligence, instead of the intelligence ruling the imagination, the result will be to delude the will, and to lead her into error and evil. It is obvious from this explanation, that the error of the will is justly called evil, and that the evil of the will is justly called error, for one does not exist without the other.

The will, then, is the central and sovereign ruler of the man. Being the active power of the soul, it is open to a vast range of motives, from the pure and serene truth in which God reveals the principles of truth and the order of justice, the luminous shadows of all good; from the sense and appetite of universal good which is in the root and essence of the soul; from the imagination with its restless and flitting imagery, drawn from the

external world; from the senses and passions of the body, as they are acted upon externally and act upon us internally; and from the memory with all its throng of ideas, imaginations, and sensations derived from the past. Thus by a marvellous power, often good, often dangerous, we open or close our minds to the present, recall the past, and make the past become the present anew.

It is the sublime office of the will to rule herself well and wisely in the midst of all these invitations, solicitations and provocations. But the law of this good and wise ruling of the will is the light of divine justice in the mind, worked into the understanding by instruction and reflection, and into the conscience, where it acts with the force of a sense, through the habit of cherishing whatever is good and right. Guided therefore by the light of justice in the mind, and the sense of justice in the conscience, the just will adheres to God before all things, as the one Supreme Good, as the Supreme Good of the soul, and as the Author of all good and of all justice. The just soul feels that God is the heart of her heart, and the mind of her mind, and that His justice is the light of all justice. She subordinates all other good to the Divine good, and all other justice to the Divine justice. She rules her senses and keeps them in their place and subjection as her servants, and mortifies them into the discipline of obedience. She controls her imagination, and makes it subservient to the light of truth; and this is the most difficult of her labours in the ruling of herself. For the imagination will inopportunely obtrude where it is not wanted, eclipsing the pure light of truth; it can only be conquered, at times, by the patient stability of the will, holding firmly athwart the intervening obscuration until the cloud passes and the sun of truth reappears.

Let any one watch his will when, despite of all lower solicitations, it holds steadfast to its high purpose. Tremulous with life, it resists change by the simple act of holding to its higher motive. As the polar needle of the ship holds to its point whilst all around and beneath is in fluctuation; so the will holds to its point, cleaving with its love to its object despite of all commotion in the inferior nature. The pole is not the port to which the ship is steering. Yet the needle, pointing to the pole, guides the ship to the port to which she is bound. But God is both the pole and the port of the soul, and the law of justice is the attraction upon the needle of the will that guides the soul on her way. Watch the

same soul when she loses sight of her guiding good, and the will no longer holds to her high motive. The ruling power of the soul is no longer firm, but inconstant, restless and capricious; it is at the mercy of the senses and the imagination; it flits in weakness and discontent from one inferior object to another, because all things have lost their just value in losing their just order, and their right relationship through that soul with their Divine Author, whose light and law is the measure of all goodness.

There is one movement of the will that should be especially noted, because it looks, at the first glance, like a standstill, although it is the noblest and most energetic exercise of the will. I refer to the just will under trial, opposition or provocation, whether under temptation, the presence of unacceptable evil, or suffering. Then the just will gathers up her strength within, attaches herself to her highest motive, and rests for strength on God as on an immovable rock; from which she refuses herself to the provocation, and abides in the concentrated strength of patience and endurance. This act is very simple, though expressed in so many words. When our Lord sent his apostles to encounter so many trials, he said to them: "In your patience you shall possess your souls." The patience that holds back consent until the truth or justice of a question appears is a similar example of the energy of the will in self-control. So far from reducing the will to inaction, the concentration of the power of the will upon its centre, and so refusing to yield to external provocation, is the strongest exertion of the will, and the greatest proof of its freedom. Hence patience and fortitude, which involve what we may call the passive exercise of the will, are the virtues that make man strong by the habit of concentrating strength. Much the same may be said of the discipline of the tongue.

But to quote the famous words of St. Augustine cited by Pope Agatho in the Sixth General Council: "As the soul is nature, the movement of the soul is the movement of nature; and as the will is the movement of the soul, it is therefore the movement of nature."* To continue the great doctor's explanation of free will: "The will is from him whose will it is. If it be the will of an angel, it is from that angel; if it be the will of a man, it is from that man; if it be the will of God, it is from God. If God works good will in man, He works it in such a manner that the

* S. Augustine, *Contra Julianum*, L. V. c. xi.

will shall spring from the man whose will it is. Just as He makes one man spring from another, for although God is the Creator of man, it does not follow that one man is not born of another man. Each one causes his own evil, because he wills evil. But when we ask how man can have an evil will, the question bears not on the cause but on the possibility of an evil will. And the answer is, that however good the nature of a creature may be, that nature is not unchangeable, and it is made from nothing."*

The Book of Ecclesiasticus gives us this vivid description of man's free will: "God made man from the beginning, and left him in the hand of his own counsel. He added the commandments and precepts,—If thou wilt keep the commandments and perform acceptable fidelity for ever, they shall preserve thee. He hath set water and fire before thee: stretch forth thy hand to which thou wilt. Before man is life and death, good and evil; that which he shall choose shall be given him."

How, then, are we to understand St. Paul where he says that God "worketh in you both to will and perfect according to His goodwill?" God works the power but not the choice of the will. Sometimes the Scriptures ascribe our will to God, sometimes to ourselves, and sometimes to both. These statements are easily reconcilable with free will. God gives us the light, the rule, and the strength to choose right and act well, and we use them or neglect them. St. Bernard explains this clearly: "If," he says, "God works in us to think, to will, and to perfect what is good, He does the first without us, the second with us, and the third through us. In sending us good thoughts He prevents us; in changing our evil will He joins our consent with His will; in ministering strength to our consent the Interior Worker causes our work to be known externally. Assuredly we cannot prevent ourselves. But he who finds no one good, can save no one unless He prevents him with His grace. Grace awakens the free will when it sows good thoughts; grace heals the will when it changes the affections; grace strengthens the will to come to action; grace preserves the will that it may not suffer defection. But this grace works with the will in such a manner as to prevent the will in the first instance, and to accompany the will in all the rest, so that the will may work henceforth together with the grace.

* S. Augustine, *Contra Julianum*, c. xlii.

Thus what is begun by grace alone, is perfected both by grace and free will, not working separately, not alternately, but in each good work unitedly."*

Although we have long delayed the immediate question of moral evil, or sin, you will have seen that each step in our path has advanced us towards it, and has been preparing us to enter upon it with a clearer understanding. As moral good is the just order of the will, moral evil, or sin, is the failure of the will from the law of moral good. It is the defection of the will from due order, right form, or just measure, which produces disorder, deformity, or loss of justice and right proportion. The due order and right conduct of the will take their measure from the light of reason and from the law of God, which represent His Eternal Justice. Man is made for justice because he is made for God, and justice perfects his nature and brings him to God. He has the form of justice within him as a luminous shadow of the justice of God, and his conscience is the interpreter of that justice; and he is just when his will is conformed to that justice. "He who hath not the law, is a law to himself." The law of justice contains all moral good, and it springs from God's eternal view of the just and essential order of things. Justice is, therefore, the will of God commanding the will of the creature to obey that light of justice which He has implanted in the mind of that creature, or has spoken to him through the word of revelation and the light of faith. God Himself, in whose hands all things are, is the authority and the sanction of the law of justice. By obeying the light and authority of God the will of man is in due order, and just conformity, and right relationship with the will of God. But whenever he wilfully fails from that due order, and refuses to conform his will to the light of justice, and to measure his conduct by the moral law, and to do the will of God, he falls into sin, and so into moral disorder. We have said that he *falls* into sin, which exactly expresses his act, because it is a defection, and a descent from what is high to what is low, from what is good to what is evil. These defective acts of the will are not only evil because the justice of God forbids them, but the justice of God forbids them because they are evil; yet the divine forbidding of them increases their moral evil, because in sinning against the divine command we offend with greater knowledge,

* S. Bernard, *De Gratia et Libera Voluntate*, c. xiv.

and with direct disobedience to the authority of our divine Creator.

To put this in another light, the evil of sin consists in turning the will from the unchangeable good which is the proper good of man, and in turning that same will to that changeable good which corrupts the soul and perverts the order of justice. Sin is therefore a sliding back and falling off from our good, and from the true end of life. When we turn from the law of God, we turn from God Himself and turn unlawfully to the creature, giving that will and love to the creature which is due to God. Hence sin is called a debt to justice, and in the Lord's Prayer it is called a debt to God. It is a failure in what we owe to justice, toGod and to ourselves. Or, as our own version of the Lord's Prayer puts it, it is a trespass, that is to say, it is an offensive stepping beyond the bounds of law, justice, and obedience.

St. Augustine expresses the whole subject in these clear terms: "The will is a certain middle good. When the will adheres to the universal and unchangeable good, it obtains the first and greatest good of man. But the will sins when it turns away from the universal and unchangeable good, and turns to its own, or to exterior, or to inferior good. The will turns to its own good when it wishes to be in its own power; it turns to exterior good when it wills to make what is another's its own, that is, when it wills to have what it has no right to have; and it turns to what is inferior to itself, when the will gives itself over to the sensualities of the body, from which the man becomes proud, curious and lascivious. He is taken up with a life that, in comparison with the life devoted to superior good, is death. Yet the providence of God overrules that life, and gives to everything its due place, and to every one what he deserves. Yet the things that the sinner gives to his will are not in themselves evil, nor is the free will in itself an evil; but evil consists in the turning of the will from unchangeable to changeable good, in doing which it is not compelled, but it acts of its own free movement, and the just and deserved punishment of misery follows."*

This, then, is the point on which to fix our special attention, that moral evil, or sin, consists in a falling off of the will from the law of justice, which justice leads the will to its true and proper good, and in the falling upon that inferior good which is unworthy

* S. Augustine, *De Libero Arbitrio*, L. II. c. xix.

and disproportioned to the dignity of our nature, and to the greatness of our end, and which disorders, debases and corrupts our soul. But this requires some further explanation. Justice requires that we love all good, with a love proportioned to its kind, order, place and degree. Injustice and disorder begin, therefore, when we put inferior good above superior good, and with absurd unreason cleave to it by preference. It is this absurdity of our conduct which lays it open to the satire of men who are not themselves just, for they can see the disproportion of things in their mind, which their own wills disregard. This preference given to inferior good, is the beginning of all disorder, and it ends in that perversion of the will which places the creature above the Creator in our love. Yet that inferior good is only given us to be used as the means of helping us to our superior good; and when we thus use it lawfully and with prudence, our will is in its just order. But when we make the means the end, and thus forget our true end, we fall into the extreme of disorder, and there is no justice in us. For justice wills that everything should hold its right place, due order, and proper subordination. And the just will is the reflection of this justice.

Moral evil therefore, as considered in itself, is nothing but a failing and defection of the will from good. Consequently the Fathers have proclaimed with a unanimous voice that evil is nothingness. But it is nothingness where there might be, and ought to be, a great good; and therefore as evil wilfully destroys the good relations of the will towards the greater good, it is injustice. It is injustice towards God to whom we owe ourselves and all we have: it is injustice towards the light of reason and the light of faith to which we refuse the obedience of our will; and it is unjust to ourselves, making the soul unjust and unreasonable, and depriving her of the great good for which she is created. It is also unjust to God's other creatures that were made to serve the justice of God, and that we make to serve us in our sins.

It will be gathered from all that has been said, that moral evil, which alone is destructive of souls, has its seat in the will. The root of sin is in the evil inclination of the will; for where evil is concerned the proverb is true, that what you intend that you do. Intention is the beginning of action, and complete intention is complete action as far as the will is concerned. Hence the completion of the intention is the completion of the sin, as it

decides the moral condition of the will; even although the act is but consummated within the soul, and has not come out externally. The imagination then becomes the field in which the sin is perpetrated. But when the evil disposition or malice of the will breaks out into external acts, they exhibit the force of the evil disposition within, and the malice of the will is apt to become more intense both through the vehemence of the evil will thrown into the action, and from the rebound of passion awakened by the external act, working up the blind concupiscence of the will to pursue its evil course with greater violence. Another consequence of bringing the internal sin into external acts is but too often to spread the fire of disorder beyond the sinner, working injustice and spreading disorder elsewhere than in the soul, and injuring other souls by scandal, example, or even violence in word or deed. There is even a malice of the will so great, that not content with its own disorder, it is inspired by the very pride which engenders that disorder, and which that disorder augments in its turn, to level other souls to its own condition, whether of disbelief or immorality.

But, as the Scripture says: "Man sees in the face, but God in the heart." Man judges by the external act, and God weighs the internal motive. The internal conscience is closed against the inspection of the courts of human law. Malice is there presumed and the evil intention is inferred from the outward act. But before the eye of God and in the court of eternal justice, the whole interior of the man is open, and his extent of guilt seen clearly in his intention.

Culpability or guiltiness, as St. Thomas observes, is the effect that follows from sin, and which obliges the guilty one to punishment. Sin passes away as an act, but the effect of that act remains, and that effect is guiltiness.* According to human judgment the guilt must be proved by external acts before it is established and punishment awarded; but according to divine judgment the guilt is established by the interior act, the proof of the act is recorded in the conscience, and the punishment already begins.

Let us consider for a moment what are the first effects of the guilt of evil. There are two objects presented to our will which make it good, the one is the good that is worthy to be sought, the

* S. Thom. *Tract. De Malo*, 2. *De Peccatis*, a. 2, *ad* 14.

other is the rule by which we seek and by which we obtain that good. This rule is moral good or the good of order, which brings us to substantial good. But by deserting the moral good of order and justice we lose the substantial good which alone can give us peace and happiness. For moral good promises what substantial good gives; and if we love God and do His will we shall come to His beatitude. The first effect therefore of the evil will, and the greatest, is the loss of that justice which promises beatitude.

The second is the dreariness and vacancy that comes upon the soul when she finds that she has severed herself from the light of truth and justice, and the law of good, and has given herself up to delusion and folly, which degrades her even in her own eyes, and fills her with remorse. Losing her subjection to God's rule, for we can only hold to what is above us by subjection, the soul loses her hold of those spiritual cords, those rays of divine light and descents of grace, by which we hold to the will of God, and falls back upon herself to taste her own bitterness, and feel the hollowness, privation, suffering and misery which follow the desertion of divine good. The gnawings of hunger in the defeated appetite for good and the pangs inflicted by the rebuking conscience, have been fitly called the worm of remorse, the sting of conscience, and the iron bite of sin. Too slothful to bring up the latent power of the will, too craven to meet the spectres of delusive temptation with the valour of a high resolve, the will sinks from the light, and the good of the will becomes the captive of concupiscence, and the victim of evil under the mask of good, which only drops off after the evil is accomplished and the pains of evil have begun. But where a long habit of evil has brought down the vital powers of the soul into a state of insensibility to the light of justice and the stings of conscience, that insensibility is the numbness and paralysis of death.

We cannot better confirm what we have said on the character of evil than by quoting the Book on the Divine Names. "Good," it says, "is the principle and the object of all wills; for even evil things are done in the expectation of good. No one, however evil, looks for anything but good when he does evil. This shows that evil in itself, and by itself, has no substance; because every one proposes some good to himself in his evil action, which has only a supposed and fictitious quality. When a being is attributed to evil, it is through the mistake of ascribing one thing to another

that does not belong to it. The sinner imagines some good when he contemplates evil; the error is in his own opinion, that confounds the good he proposes with the evil that he commits. What he intends is one thing, and what he does is another. . . . . But evil can do nothing without a mixture of good, for what has no part or portion of good is nothing. Evil in Satan is his want of likeness and conformity with the Supreme Good. Evil in the soul of man is want of conformity with reason and with grace. Evil in the body is want of conformity with nature."*

This is the reason why moral evil is called iniquity. St. John says: "Every one who committeth sin, committeth iniquity: and sin is iniquity." Iniquity is the want of equity in the will to equalize the soul with the light and law of justice.

To sum up in the words ascribed to the Areopagite: "Evil is privation, defect, weakness, disproportion, error. It is without object, without beauty, without life; it is without intelligence, without reason, without perfection, without any place of rest. It hath no cause; it is indefinite, it is barren, it is empty, it is imbecile, it is disorderly. Evil is aimless, darksome, and void of all being whatsoever."

This profound writer then lays down the great maxim, which has become so famous, that "good proceeds from one full and absolute cause, but evil from many particular defects;" and he thus explains it: "Whatever is according to nature proceeds from a certain and definite cause; but as evil is indefinite and has no certain cause, it is not according to nature; and what is not according to nature is neither to be found in nature nor in art. For true art finds its reason in nature. But although evil proceeds from many causes, these are not reasons or powers, but weaknesses, infirmities, and defects, or they are a mixture of incongruous and discordant things without measure or proportion. Hence evils are versatile and changeable, and they never remain the same; they are indefinite, uncertain, and indeterminable; they hurry this way and that to divers things as indefinite and uncertain as themselves."†

How the will destroys justice in the soul by falling from superior good, is thus explained by St. Augustine: "Sin or iniquity is not the appetite for natural evils, but the desertion of the better

* S. Dionys. Areop. *De Divinis Nominibus*, c. iv.

† *Ibid.* c. iv.

things. The Scripture says that every creature of God is good. Consequently, every tree that God planted in Paradise was good. It was not, then, to any evil in the nature of the tree to which man gave his appetite, when he touched the forbidden tree, but he committed the evil act by deserting what was better. The Creator was a far greater good than any creature He had made, and His authority was not to be abandoned for the sake of touching what God had forbidden him to touch, even though what Adam touched might itself be good. But he hungered for a good in the creature that could only be obtained by deserting his Creator, who forbade his touching that tree. God gave the prohibition to show that the rational soul is not in her own power, but that she ought to be subject to God, and to keep the order of salvation through obedience, which is lost through the evil of disobedience. For this reason, when God forbade the tree to be touched, He called it the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because when the man touched the tree he experienced the penalties of evil. . . . . Evil, therefore, consists in using good in an evil way. When St. Paul rebuked the men 'who worship the creature rather than the Creator,' and declared they were condemned in the divine judgment, he did not rebuke the creature, for that would have been injurious to God, but he rebuked the men who use the creature in an evil way whilst giving up what is better."

The works of men are evil, as the great doctor elsewhere points out, when they are done according to self, and not according to God. This is the radical disease, and the cause of all the evil effects and sufferings that follow. For we repeat again, and can never repeat too often, that we are not made for ourselves but for God; that we are no object to ourselves, but that God is our final object. Our justice is not from ourselves, but from God. Our life is not from ourselves, but from God. When, therefore, we turn our back on God and our face to the creature as the chief bent of our desire; when we attempt to build up a spirit, life, truth, good and happiness out of the poor, weak, inconstant, disaccordant things that are beneath the soul, and designed to be her servants; we fall into a degradation and a turpitude that calumniates the whole plan of our Creator. We grow insolent against God; discard His light; overturn His justice; refuse His love; break the golden links that bind us to His goodness; insult His patience; and even repel His ever-waiting mercy. We set up

our petty self in the void we make between heaven and earth, to be honoured with the love that we owe to the God that made us, and to be worshipped with the obscene rites of pride, vanity, and sin to our unspeakable unreason, dishonour, and shame; for this poor god of our choice is still aching with the pains of want and misery.

The more sin the less freedom. Freedom lifts up our will to great and high things; sin depresses us to low and mean things. When we reflect what self is, we must see at once that a man chained to himself cannot be free. He is a captive within the narrow crypt of his egotism, and enveloped with the darkening shadows thrown off from his pride and sensuality. The pathways to the divine truth and eternal good are far beyond his flight; the wings of his spirit, both the wing of faith and the wing of love, are clogged with the mire of his ways, so that neither his heart nor mind can ascend to the regions of truth and justice. Fastened as with rivets to the things beneath him, his will loses its freedom in the clay of his concupiscence, and that concupiscence is blind, sensual and egotistical of the body. A man is corporally free in proportion to the space over which he can freely move, and in which he can freely act. He is mentally free in proportion to the breadth and elevation of the sphere of truth in which he can think. He is morally free in proportion to the grandeur and elevation of that justice to which his will can conform its actions. He is spiritually free in proportion to the greatness and purity of that good with which his soul is allied. But though he has the freedom of responsibility, he has no large or generous freedom, when with the glue of concupiscence his will cleaves to himself, and through himself to the base things of this lower world, first to one and then to another, the bond slave rather than the master of what was ordained for his service, so that his will is neither truly free nor luminous, nor elevated, nor pure.

How is such a will to be healed and purified? Not by the amputation of what belongs to its nature, nor by covering over its infirmity; but by rectifying its injustice, and by receiving a new justice and a new life from heaven. "Put off, according to your former conversation, the old man who is corrupted according to the desire of error, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind: and put on the new man, who, according to God,

is created in justice, and holiness of truth." This new man, the healer of the old, is Christ.

Let us once more hear St. Augustine, and so conclude. "Evil is not removed by the taking away of any part of our existing nature, nor by adding another nature to man; but by healing and rectifying what is vitiated and depraved in him. The will becomes truly free when it is no longer the slave of vice or sin. Such it was when God first gave it; but when the true freedom of the will is lost, God who gave that freedom can alone restore it. Hence truth hath said: 'If the Son shall set you free, then shall you be truly free.' As if He had said: If the Son shall heal you, then shall you be truly healed. For He who sets free is He who heals."*

* S. August. *De Civitate Dei*, L. XIV. c. xi.

LECTURE IX.

ON PENAL EVIL OR PUNISHMENT.

"Tribulation and anguish on every soul of man that worketh evil."
ROM. ii. 9.

WE have seen that natural evil is nothing but the limitation of good. We have also seen that the overwhelming amount of natural evil has been the result of moral evil, or sin, and that it bears upon it the character of punishment. We may also say that the limitation of natural good which has followed after sin, is in many respects a providential and a merciful dispensation, forasmuch as it has made this present life less attractive, has put man himself under the discipline of labour, and has greatly diminished the resources of sin, however much remains. Could we have known man and the earth in the happy state of innocence, and then our present state, and have been able to make the comparison between them, we should have wanted no proof of the deterioration and degradation which the sin of man has brought upon the creation. Adam alone had this woful vision of the changed state of things before him, during his long sojourn on the deteriorated earth, until his bones were laid, if we believe the Hebrew tradition, in the mound of Calvary.

As sin is a defection of the will, it is not visible to mortal eyes; but the results of sin are everywhere visible, both in the children of Adam and in the inferior creation, which, as it was made for man, through the Providence that rules over both, partakes ever of his fortunes. The tradition of the fall of man from a golden age is so universal, that it may be almost considered as a part of the human conscience. As penal evil is both the natural consequence and the just punishment of moral evil—that is, of the sin

of created wills, we are brought to the inevitable conclusion, which both the natural instincts and the religious sense of mankind confirm, that, either directly or indirectly, sin is the original cause, the ever fertile and flowing source of all the evils and calamities by which the race of man is afflicted and made to suffer.

So long as man was innocent, the goodness and benignity of God alone appeared. In His fatherly providence, He exercised that affluent justice towards His own eternal plans that stand for ever before His vision; and He filled up by degrees His own magnificent plan of creation. With the profusion of His gifts, God advanced the first good of his creation to better things, and what was lower in the creation was raised to higher states of good to fulfil its ends. But when sin broke out from the will of man, and this moral disorder deranged the whole order of the Divine plan until it seemed without a remedy, the retributive justice of God burst forth from the heavens to regulate evil with punishment. That Retributive Justice descends with sorrowing heart and a breast of anguish upon the self-elated and rebellious children of God; the genius, as it were, of pain and privation, it descends to admonish, to chastise, to deprive the evil will of its strength in evil, lest that evil become gigantic and portentous; to drive back the evil will from evil with the miseries engendered by evil; and to bring back the evil will to good through the mercy that accompanies chastisement. But if all chastisement, with all the tender touches of mercy that come to open the heart with its visitation, fail to soften the hardness, and subdue the swelling of the rebel heart; if the malice of sin is ungratefully fostered against God to the end; then as chastisement has utterly failed to conquer the obdurate evil, justice must change the mercy of chastisement to that inevitable punishment which, to preserve the due order of things, must separate unchangeable evil from unchangeable good for everlasting.

But this is not half the account of that justice which came upon man after his fall from God. Having lost the principle of justice by the moral failure of his will from its supporting power; having lost, I say, that principle of justice which God has implanted by grace in his nature, and by fidelity to which his nature would have kept its order and just relationship with God as his final end; all chastisement must ever fail to bring even one soul to God unless a new justice come from heaven and ordain him

towards God anew, taking the place of that justice which he lost in Paradise. With that justice therefore which is due from goodness to evil, with that justice by which the Divine goodness imposes an order upon evil suited to its evil character; there comes forth from the Divine bosom another and a superabounding justice with the magnificence of a superabounding power, that crowns the Divine plan of human restoration with infinite mercy. In this new order of justice, mightier and diviner than the first, God the Son takes human nature to Himself from a pure source; and He by whom man was created, by whom he is illuminated, and who is Himself the most perfect and innocent justice, shall expiate the sins of man with an infinite satisfaction, through sufferings inflicted upon Him by injustice and sin.

The punishment that regulates evil is in itself an order of good, because it comes of good, and regulates evil for the sake of good. This is exemplified in human justice, which is an imperfect imitation of Divine justice. Human justice is a good and provident regulation of evil for the sake of good through the instrumentality of punishment. It so far imitates the Divine justice that it always looks to an evil will as the source of the evil that it punishes. St. Paul therefore says of the minister of social justice: "He is God's minister to thee, for good: for he beareth not the sword in vain, for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Every man owes loyalty and good conduct to the society of which he is a member. But if instead of doing good he does evil to society; if he troubles its order with disorder; if he disturbs its rights with injustice, he owes a debt of justice to the common good, to expiate his evil with punishment, that his disorder may be rectified by another kind of order, imposed upon him against his will. But if the evil he commits is a mortal offence destructive of society or its members, and is therefore beyond a temporal remedy, the good of society demands that he be cut off from it by exile, death, or isolation among like criminals, apart from the good members of society. The justice of man has therefore its two orders of punishment like the justice of God; the one a temporal chastisement in vindication of justice, directed to the amendment and recovery of the criminal; the other a final separation from the good, both for the vindication of justice, and to protect the good from incurable evil. The prerogative of mercy in the

sovereign power upon amendment, is again an imitation of the Divine mercy, which restores the penitent to favour.

Every law of God commands good in forbidding evil. It holds forth good as the reward of well-doing, and threatens evil as the consequence of evil-doing, that the fear of evil may be the beginning of good. Yet God leaves not our weak nature to struggle with divine laws, but gives divine help to reach their divine order, and the most help to those who desire and seek it most. With the appetite for good He has implanted the fear of evil and the dread of punishment in the soul of man; that whilst the love of good may draw him to good, the fear of punishment may deter him from evil. But the Divine warnings of punishment can no more be a delusion than the Divine promises of reward. They are no mockery. Man is free: God cannot lie. In the hand of Divine justice the punishment of evil is the essential counterpart to the reward of good. It is so in the very reason of things, and is known to all minds, and is felt by all consciences.

We are the architects of our own fortune, whether good or bad; and when we look at the two sides of justice, what special beatitude can be expected for the just soul, if no especial misery awaits the unjust soul? Let the light of Eternal Truth but shine upon us, and even from the sufferings of sinners in this world will it show us, that no one can desert God without sinking into misery. Let but the light from the Eternal Good shine upon us, and it will show us how all good is in God, and that whoever leaves God must depart into evil. But evil is itself the punishment of evil. Let the light from the Divine Good but illuminate our darkness, and we shall see that were no other evil to follow the desertion of that good, the loss of that good alone is the greatest of evils and bitterest of punishments. Oh! Thou Divine and Incomprehensible Reason: give to our reason, Thy gift, the light to see, how great is the good of a rational soul. So great is this good, that when the soul neither enjoys God, nor holds just relations with him, she must be miserable. So true is this, to such a demonstration has it reached even in this life, that we have now whole schools of men, who, after rejecting both God and their own souls in the name of philosophy, have proclaimed to the world that life is nothing but hopeless bitterness and misery. Thus fearfully have they proved by experience what the wise have taught without experience.

When David arose from his sin, and looked back upon the sufferings it had brought upon him, he exclaimed: "Oh! God, who is like to Thee? How great troubles Thou hast shown me, many and grievous." On which St. Augustine comments from a like bitter experience: "Most justly! oh, thou proud one! Thou art made to God's image, and wouldst be the perverse imitator of God. Whilst deserting thy good thou wouldst have thy good still with thee; but God tells thee: If it were well with thee after parting with Me, it would become evident that I am not thy good. But if God be good, the supreme good, and thy good, what canst thou find in abandoning thy God but evil? If God is thy happiness, what canst thou find in leaving thy God but misery? Come back from thy misery to God, and say: Oh! God, who is like to Thee? How great troubles Thou hast shown me, many and grievous."*

No one can conquer the laws of the Almighty. Each man must pay his debts to the Divine justice. We must either do justice or suffer justice. We must either offer to God the fruits of the good we have received, or we must lose the good we have neglected and abused. Nor can the least delay be tolerated between guilt and the beginning of punishment, because the beauty of universal justice cannot suffer disorder for a moment. The evil of the instant is avenged on the instant, however secretly, by privation and remorse; whilst the open judgment is preparing, that will bring the bitter sense of misery to the common knowledge of all men. As quick as the change from sleep to waking is the passage from sin to suffering; because the blessed state of justice is a good so exceeding great, that no one can suffer the loss of it without finding instant misery.†

In this present time God comes in secret and silent ways, both to the heart of the just and the heart of the unjust man. But He will not be always silent, not always secret. Much the greater part of the rewards of the just are at present in secret; and much the greater part of the punishments of the unjust are at present in secret. Who are the just of heart? They who humbly, peacefully and submissively endure the evils of the world, and do not accuse God because of them. Rare birds are these, but beautiful as rare, soaring with the wings of thought above this world, and resting

* S. August. *In Psalm* lxx. Serm. 2.

† Id., *De Libero Arbitrio*, L. III. c. xv.

their spirit on the world above. If they are so few, it is because most men when they do good praise themselves, in their own breast at least; and when they do evil, they complain, and complain unjustly, and this complaint is an implicit accusation of God. But in thus winding round their self-love, and coiling a defence round their unjust heart, they reveal the depravity within them. For it is certainly unjust, and if unjust, depraved, to praise ourselves for the good that God gives us; as it is depraved to accuse God by our complaints of the evils we have done ourselves. But when a man uncoils from his self-love, and turns from injustice to justice, from himself to God, he will then praise God for what is good in him, and accuse himself for what is evil in him. And when his own heart is right, then he will know "how good is the God of Israel to all who are right of heart." He cannot, however, be right in his own heart if he thinks that unjust men are happy; for whoever thinks that unjust men are happy, must himself be ignorant of what it is to be happy.*

Plato speaks like a Christian where he says, that "virtue is the beauty of the soul," but that "beauty is difficult." St. Augustine expresses the same thought from a higher point of view: "Justice," he says, "is true and sovereign beauty. You will never see that beauty where you find injustice. What is in all respects just is in all respects beautiful." Savonarola, in his "Triumph of the Cross," puts it in this way: If you take two persons equally beautiful by nature, even in the judgment of wicked men, the holiest will be the most beautiful. The first penal effect of sin is the privation and loss of that spiritual beauty which is the splendour resulting from the inward grace, truth, purity and harmony of the soul, a beauty that radiates into the features and conduct unconsciously, and which inspires even unjust men with a trust in that soul, and with the charm of her excellence. But the first penalty of sin is the internal discord, trouble and distress that comes upon the soul, with the consciousness of deformity, and the effort to conceal the inward change, most commonly in vain. And how often, as with our first parents, does the pride and shame that seek concealment of the evil, lead to excusings, fencings and maskings of the soul's condition, that falsifies the spirit and destroys the habit of sincerity.

When the will of man is disordered by sin, and by destroying the

* S. August. *Tract.* 28 *in Joan.*

good of his nature the central principle of life is disordered, and the force that rules life is weakened; pain and trouble follow this weakness and disorder as a necessary consequence. As the soul is the vital principle of the body as well as its ruler; weakness, disorder and loss of vital power must necessarily follow in the body. As the body is an organized mixture of earthly elements, the feeblest of substances and nearest to nothingness, immortality could never have been natural to man. It was a supernatural and divine gift to our first parents. But by sin the divine gift was lost, and by sin the due subjection of the body to the soul was lost. As an effect cannot be greater than its cause, the cause of our corporal condition is the corporal condition of those from whom it is derived; we therefore inherit their mortality, and with that mortality we inherit the weakness, disorder and lusting of the flesh against the spirit, which are the results of rebellion against our Creator.

Penal evil or punishment is in its nature afflictive both on account of sin and in vindication of justice. As sin is against the will of God, and as it is a violation of justice, the punishment of sin in the order of justice is against the will, or at least against the inclination of the guilty one. As punishment follows sin, it is either the privation of the good for which man was made, and which he has abandoned and forfeited by his sin, or it is the sensible pain and suffering inflicted upon his nature because of sin. The first is the pain of loss, the second is the pain of sense. As man is made for God, and for union with God through the beatific vision, by deadly sin he separates himself from God, and is deprived of the beatific vision of God, which is the final happiness of man. This pain of loss, which is the most grievous of all punishments, comes not by the act of God, but by the act of man, which God in His justice permits. The pain of sense is partly the direct consequence of the disorder that follows sin, and partly the act of Divine justice, afflicting the sinner in vindication of eternal justice. It is the man who corrupts the action of his will by his sin, but the pain which punishes sin corrupts the man.

We cannot better illustrate these principles, and the whole subject of punishment, and especially the distinction between the pain of loss and the pain of sense, than by giving a full exposition of the case of infants who depart this world without the grace of regeneration. And to give the exposition the greatest theological

weight, we shall follow the larger explanation which St. Thomas has given of the question in his special treatise "On Evil."

Pope Innocent III. says in the Decretals that "the penalty due to original sin is the privation of the beatific vision."* St. Thomas lays down his fundamental principle from St. Gregory the Great, that the mind when estranged from God cannot see the Divine light as it is, because that mind is captive under condemnation, and in this state of captivity that light is concealed from the mind He then argues as follows. It is a much greater thing to obtain a great good with external help, than only to obtain a little good without that external help. For instance, it is a greater thing to obtain solid and substantial health with the help of the physician than to have but feeble health without that external help. As a rational creature man excels all the inferior creatures in this, that he is capable of the Supreme Good through enjoying the beatific vision of God. But the principles of his nature are not sufficient for obtaining the Divine vision; he stands in need of the external help of Divine grace. This external help is necessary to every rational creature, to dispose and to prepare his nature, to advance that nature towards God, and to make it well pleasing to Him, before the rational creature can come to the perfect beatitude. St. Paul therefore says: "The grace of God, life everlasting."

But beside that Divine help which is needful for every rational creature, whether angel or man, to make him pleasing to God and fit for union with Him; man himself requires another supernatural help, because of his composite nature. For man is composed of body and soul, of a sensual as well as an intelligent nature; and when these are left to themselves, the body with its senses weighs upon the mind, and hinders its free ascent to the things that are above his nature. This help was original justice, a grace through which the mind was subject to God, and the inferior powers as well as the body were completely subjected to the mind, so that the reason of man suffered no hindrance in seeking God and in advancing towards Him. As the body is for the soul, and the sense for the understanding, this help of original justice, which subjected the body to the soul, and the sensitive powers to the intelligent mind, is a certain predisposition of the man towards that other Divine help of grace which prepares the mind to see

* *Decret.* L. III. tit. 42, cap *Majores.*

God, and the soul to enjoy God. When therefore any one casts that help away from him by his sin, which prepares him for his good, he deserves to lose that very good for obtaining which he was prepared; and the loss of that good is his proper punishment. The proper punishment of original sin, therefore, is the loss of grace, and consequently the loss of the Divine vision for which man was ordained by the grace of God.

But everything that fails from its final end is an utter failure, and is altogether in vain. And from this it follows, that if man could not reach his beatitude, he would become an utter failure, and God would have made him in vain. To prevent his becoming such a failure through his birth in original sin, God prepared a remedy from the beginning of the human race, in the Divine Mediator between man and God, the God and man Christ Jesus, that through faith in Him and the sacrament of faith, the obstacle of original sin might be removed, and he might be set free from the vanity of failure. In the 88th Psalm David asks of God: "Remember what my substance is: for hast Thou made all the children of men in vain?" Upon which the Gloss observes from St. Augustine, that David prayed for the Incarnation of the Son, who is to take flesh from his substance to deliver men from their vanity.

The soul of the child that dies without baptism is not, however, deprived of the Divine vision because of Adam's personal sin, but because that child is itself infected with original sin, contracted through the descent of its body from that first parent. And, to use the exact words of St. Thomas, the culpability that attaches to the soul "is derived from the flesh to the soul." For, as St. Paul teaches: "By one man sin came into the world, and by sin death: and so death passed upon all men in whom all have sinned."

If we consider the privation of the enjoyment of God as it respects the good that is lost, it is the greatest of privations; but as it respects the nature of the soul herself, we must take another measure to represent the Divine justice. When we consider the soul in herself, the severest punishment is that which deprives her of what belongs to her nature, and is due to her nature. It is a greater punishment to deprive a man of his natural inheritance, for example, than to deprive him of a crown that is not due to him. Viewed in this light, the privation of the Divine vision

without any punishment that affects his own nature, is the mildest of punishments, because the Divine vision is a good that is altogether above and beyond his nature, it is not due to his nature, and the loss of it takes nothing from his nature.*

But the pains of sense are not due as a punishment to original sin alone. They are only due to personal sin, to sin committed by the free will of the guilty one. As original sin is not actual sin, as it is derived from the will of another, it is not subjected to sensible suffering. This distinction, although not formerly expressed, is clearly intimated in the words of Christ Our Lord to Nicodemus: "Amen, amen I say to thee, unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The privation of the vision of God is here plainly pointed out as the consequence of death without the grace of baptism. It has been acutely observed that wherever our Divine Teacher speaks of sensible sufferings to be inflicted on the guilty, He always makes some reference to actual or personal sins, as where He says: "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire. . . . . For I was hungry, and ye gave me not to eat," and the rest. It has also been observed that in none of the Apostolic writings is there mention of positive sufferings inflicted on those who have not been guilty of actual sins.†

St. Gregory Nazianzen, a man of such authority that St. Augustine called him the mouth of the Church, in his 40th Oration, which is expressly on Holy Baptism, distinguishes three classes of persons who die without baptism: those who despise the sacrament; those who omit it through their own negligence; and those infants who die without baptism through the negligence of others. And he thus pronounces what each will incur after death: "I account it will be, that the first of these will suffer punishment both for their crimes and for their contempt of baptism; that those who depart without baptism through no depravity of soul, but through their negligence, will also suffer punishment, but of a lighter kind; but the last mentioned, that is infants, will neither receive the heavenly glory nor endure torments from the Just Judge; for although they were not sealed with baptism, they were yet without malice, and rather suffered this loss than were the cause of it. He who deserves no punishment is not on that

* S. Thoma, *De Malo*, q. 5, a. 1.
† Ibid., q. 5, a. 2.

account entitled to honour; as he who is unworthy of honour is not on that account deserving of punishment." St. Gregory of Nyssa also says in his Oration on Infants dying without baptism: "The premature death of infants demonstrates that in ceasing from this life they will neither suffer pain nor grief." Celebrated are the words of St. Bernard in his 3rd Sermon on the Resurrection: "What doth God hate, what He doth punish but self-will? Let self-will cease, and hell will not exist. Against what does that fire rage, but against self-will?" Although St. Augustine had great difficulty in defining what the state of infants who depart without baptism would be, yet he says: "Who can doubt but that it will be the lightest of condemnations?"* And elsewhere he says that their penalty will be "the mildest of all."†

St. Thomas has shown the reasonableness of this doctrine on three distinct grounds. In the first place, it is obvious that the penalty must be in proportion to the culpability; as Isaias says: "In measure against measure, when it shall be cast off, Thou shalt judge it." But the pain of sense is not a measure proportioned or due to original sin, because it is not a sin of the will or of the person, but a sin of nature, which ought therefore to be punished with the natural penalty of privation, but not with the personal penalty of suffering. Sensible punishment falls upon the person because of his own passions, to which he unjustly yields himself; but the pain of loss is a penalty upon nature because it is deprived of grace and original justice, without which the vision of God cannot be given, because it cannot be given to mere nature unprepared by grace and justice to receive it. Moreover, this law and order of punishment is proclaimed in the Apocalypse: "Render to her, as she also hath rendered to you; and double unto her double according to her works. . . . . As much as she hath glorified herself, and lived in delicacies, so much torment and sorrow give ye to her." Here the pains of sense correspond with actual sins committed wilfully, whether spiritual sins of pride and self-glorification, or sensual sins, expressed by living in delicacies. But infants have no responsible will that can be the cause of sin.

In the second place, the pains of sense are not due to a mere habitual disposition or inclination of nature. Neither God nor

* S. August. *Contrâ Julianum*, L. 5, c. 11.

† *Encheiridion*, c. 93. See Billuart, *Dissert.* 7, *De Effectibus Peccati*, a. 6.

man punish men because they are by nature inclined to steal, but only because they have stolen or have had the intention of stealing. Again, where there is an habitual defect, there must be some loss proportioned to that defect. For example, a man without education is not prepared for sacred orders. But the unbaptized infant is under the defect of being without grace or original justice, and is therefore unprepared for the vision of God. But as the child has only the habitual disposition to concupiscence in its nature, without any actual concupiscence in the will, such as is found in those who have come to the age of reason, the pains of sense are not proportioned to their state, or due to them, if they die without the grace of regeneration, but only the pain of loss.

In the third place, the pain of sense corresponds with the conversion of the soul to inferior and changeable good, as the chief object of desire, whilst the pain of loss corresponds with the aversion of the soul from God. In actual sins of the will there is both this aversion from God, and this conversion to the creature in place of God, and therefore both the pain of loss and the pain of sense are due to them. But in original sin alone there is not this turning of the will from God to the creature, but only a state of nature alienated from God because the soul is destitute of original justice.*

One question yet remains to complete this inquiry. Are those who die in no other sin than what they have inherited by nature subject to grief and sorrow because of their loss? Or have they a natural happiness in their place of exile? Here, as in the whole of this question, we may accept the guidance of St. Thomas.

Affliction is in justice due to the delight that is taken in sin. But there is no such selfish delight in original sin, and consequently no grief or sorrow is due to its presence. Then, those who die in their infancy without the gift of faith, have their minds limited to natural knowledge after they are freed from the body; they cannot have that supernatural knowledge which is given to faith, so that they know not what that divine beatitude and glory is which the saints enjoy, and which is far above the natural knowledge of the creature. St. Paul teaches as much when he says: "It is written that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it

* S. Thoma, *De Malo*, q. 5, a. 2.

entered the heart of man, what things God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them, by his spirit." Those therefore who have not the supernatural knowledge implanted in this life by faith, cannot grieve for the loss of what they do not know, or desire that of which they are ignorant. They are not without the natural knowledge belonging to separated souls, and from that the soul knows that she was created for beatitude, and that this beatitude consists in reaching the perfect good; but what that beatitude is, or in what that good consists, is a knowledge beyond nature, and only revealed to faith. As the souls of these children are deprived of the good of faith, their knowledge of the supreme and final good is vague and general. They have not the specific light and special knowledge that can cause them to grieve at their loss. As those who are born to a low estate do not grieve at not being in exalted station; and as the children of rude races do not grieve for the want of civilization, but are contented with their lot in life; so these aliens from divine beatitude enjoy the goods of nature without grieving for what is above their knowledge and aspirations.*

It must also be observed that those who quit this life in actual and personal sin have reached the age of responsibility, and they consequently had an aptitude in themselves for obtaining eternal life, which they have neglected and abused; but infants have no such aptitude in themselves; they are dependent on others for the grace of baptism, and there is therefore no equality between the two cases. That a child should receive the grace of eternal life through the will of another, before it can act for itself, is a superabounding and exceeding grace; and the want of such a grace cannot grieve those who are not themselves capable of seeking such a gift. Even so do the great saints receive wonderful gifts that ordinary Christians do not know, and for the want of which they do not grieve.†

St. Thomas therefore concludes, that "although children dying without baptism are separated from God, and are deprived of union with Him though His glorious vision, they are not utterly separated from Him as partakers of natural good; and they may thus enjoy as from God a natural knowledge and a natural happiness."‡

* S. Thoma, *De Malo*, q. 5, a. 3. † Id., 2, *Sentent.* d. 33, a. 2.
‡ *De Malo*, q. 5, a. 3.

We have dwelt upon this abstruse but most interesting question at some length, not only for the sake of the instruction it conveys, but for the sake of the light which the principles here brought together gives to the whole question of penal evil. Let us now turn our consideration to the punishment of that actual sin for which the will of man is responsible.

St. Augustine justly observes, that "if all men kept themselves to the just measure and order of their nature, there would be no evil. But if men will use the good they have in an evil way, even then they can never conquer the will of God. For God knows how to dispose of the unjust in the order of justice. If, through their unjust will, men will make an evil use of His good, in the might of His justice God will ordain for them what their evil deserves. He will ordain those to justice who have ordained themselves to sin."* Again, he says: "To the most excellent of creatures, to rational souls, God has granted that they cannot be corrupted against their wills; they cannot be corrupted so long as they keep their obedience to the Lord their God, and adhere to His unchangeable beauty. But if they will not keep their obedience, they are corrupted by their own will in their sins; and against their own will they will be corrupted in their punishment. For God is so great a good, that no one who abandons Him can be in a good state. And the rational soul is so great a good, that she cannot be happy with anything less than God. This is the reason why sinners are ordained to punishment. As this ordinance is at disagreement with their nature, it is punishment; but as it accords with their guilt it is justice."†

The justice of God is inseparable from his goodness. For, as we have already shown, His justice is the perfect order of His perfect goodness. God is not as man that He should suffer division. His divine attributes enter into each other, and are one in their operation. It is most important to keep this in view, lest by thinking in a weak, human way, we should set up the goodness of God against His justice, as if the one annihilated the other, although the justice of God is the very order that perfects His goodness. In these days of little faith, small reason, and great sensuality, this weak way of getting rid of the divine justice is not only frequent among men, but they even flatter themselves with

* S. August., *De Natura Boni*, c. 36. † Ibid., c. 7.

the notion that it proves their own goodness of heart. Against this weakness we shall adduce the solid argument of Tertullian, with some expansion nevertheless of his severe brevity for the sake of its easier comprehension.

From God alone, he says, can we learn how He is infinitely good, and how in virtue of that goodness He is infinitely just. He is infinitely good in all that is His own, and infinitely just with respect to all that is ours. If man had never sinned, in virtue of his innocent nature he would have only known God as He is infinitely good. But having lost his innocence, from the necessity of the case he must suffer from the justice of God. Yet God is equally good in being just. He exhibits the same justice, the same order of good, which is always one and the same, though in a twofold way, in helping the good and in punishing the wicked. In both these exercises of justice He consults nothing but good, for in the one case He is the rewarder of good, and in the other He is the vindicator of good.

Good by nature, and good to man from the beginning of his existence, God is only severe where the conduct of the creature calls for severity. The goodness of God is inborn in Him from eternity; His severity is but the accidental justice that is called forth to regulate the evil of which His creature is the only cause. What belongs to God's nature is the justice of good; but what is applied to the wilful error of the creature is the good of justice. If the nature of God be such that He cannot leave His goodness unexercised, the evil cause cannot escape His justice. As He is the unchangeable truth, how can He dissemble the severity that is justly due to evil? As we must confess that evil deeds are unjust, from the same reason and truth we are compelled to admit that the good of justice must be greater in proportion as the evil of injustice becomes greater.

Justice is not only good, but it is the protector and the defence of good; for unless goodness were regulated by justice, it would cease to be good, and would become unjust. Yet nothing is good that is unjust, because justness is essential to good. Every act of justice is therefore the procuring of good, whether it be in judging evil, or in condemning evil, or in punishing evil, for even to condemn evil is to punish evil. When we consider how many allurements are put forth by evil, how urgent those allurements are, and how destructive of good, who could despise the spreading of

this evil? who could leave it unpunished without encouraging the destruction of good? Although the threatenings of our Creator strike us with fear and terror, yet they scarcely keep us from evil. What then would it be were God not to threaten us with punishment? What if those threatenings were not the very truth of his justice? Can that justice be evil that will not suffer evil? Can we deny that to be good which protects all good? Who can be the author of good but He who is always demanding and exacting good? Who can be a stranger to evil but he who is always resisting evil? Who is the adversary of evil but he who is the assailer of evil? Who is the assailer of evil but he who punishes evil? God is all-good because He acts in all things, even in the punishment of evil for the sake of good.*

The law of justice, which embraces all the virtues under the dominion of charity, is therefore the true order of the right relations between the soul and God. Justice puts the man in harmony with the object and end of his being. Obedience to the order of justice leads him to God. The desertion of this order is the desertion of God. A grave and deliberate violation of justice in any one point is a breach of the whole principle of order and obedience, a violation of the principles of justice and charity, and consequently it is a desertion of God. St. James has expressed this truth in saying, that "Whosoever shall keep the whole law, yet offend in one point, is become guilty of all." In deserting the law of justice and charity he sins against the light of God, and is unfaithful to the grace of God. In deserting God he commits treason against the divine sovereignty, contumacy against the divine majesty, ingratitude against the divine goodness, and is an abuser of God's prodigal gifts. He deserts God by his own free act and choice, and if he perseveres in this desertion to the end of his life, the power of choice is no longer left him; he has for ever made his choice of apostasy from the infinite and eternal Good for which he was made; it is final, it is irrevocable. There is a gulf between that soul and God that can never be passed over, because the communion between that soul and God has been utterly broken down by the soul herself.

It belongs to the essential order of eternal good, that it cannot admit of union or admixture with the malice and disorder of evil. In the judging of the unjust soul, the will is the fact; the acts of

* Tertullian, *De Resurrectione Carnis*, c. 14; and *Adversus Marcion*, L.II. c. 11.

the will are the evidence; the light of the soul is the law; God and the conscience are the witnesses. Separated from the world and self-condemned; separated from God and condemned of God, the everlasting soul of the sinner departing in his sins, can only be consigned to the place and company, where malice, darkness and disorder are everlasting. "Be astonished, oh ye heavens, at this, and ye gates thereof be very desolate, saith the Lord. For my people have done two evils: they have forsaken me, the fountain of living water, and have dug for themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water."

Where, then, is the mercy of God? The mercy of God is everywhere, and is everywhere exalted above His judgments. Even in hell there is mitigation of the full rigour of justice, although the hour of grace is past, and conversion is no longer possible. But who in this world can fathom the depths of the evil of separation from God? Who can open the gates of justice and explore the miseries of a soul left to herself? What is it to be a living subject vacant and void, because deprived of her living object? The whole nature of the soul is there, with all her appetites, powers, passions, and cravings; yet without their objects. Thirsting for ever for a good that can never come, yet never consumed because immortal; "longing for death, and it cometh not," the soul is immortal in immortal pains. And the wicked torment the wicked in their malice, as they have done on earth, so more potently where all is despair of good.

"The mercy of God is over all the earth;" a mercy wide working, superabounding, wonderful. In nothing is that mercy more plentifully shown than in the chastisements sent to correct the errors of the sinful race of man; or in the adversities raised up to purify and strengthen the just of heart. Yet the perverse are blind to them, and the men who fear God alone read them aright. In His pity to His children, the wrath of God comes from His mercy, chastising but to spare. He blinds the raging persecutor and strikes him down, that He may enlighten him into an apostle. Some He chastises with their own sins, that He may bring them to repentance. For "many are the scourges of the sinner." Some He beats down from the pride and tumour of their souls with sharp and keen humiliations. For "God resists the proud." Some He scourges with the creatures they have abused, that they may return to their Creator. For "He

chastiseth every son whom He receiveth." God knows far better than we do of what we stand in need, and His severer remedies are the medicines of His charity.

It is among the richest ordinations of God's providence that souls profusely help each other, some with intention, some without intention, and some against intention. Hence souls obtain great help and profit both from the good and the wicked. They are moved to good by seeing the reward of the good, and are deterred from evil by seeing how the wicked are punished. The punishment of evil works therefore for good as well as the rewards of well-doing. Then the evil with their evil deeds bring the virtues of the good into exercise in a thousand ways, giving them a great, a difficult, and a laborious field for their exercise. There is not a virtue, be it of prudence, justice, fortitude, or temperance, that is not called forth, put to its trial, and consolidated by the opposition of evil. There is not a theological virtue, be it faith, hope or charity, that is not raised to a higher power, and that may not become heroic, through the opposition of error, and the trials and persecutions in all shapes that the humble endure from the proud, the charitable from the uncharitable, and the godly from the godless. But the final result is an accumulation of the wealth of virtue and sanctity in souls, such as without the opposition of evil would not exist, or would only exist in a much inferior degree. The good of just souls rises greatly, therefore, in degree and quality by their overcoming evil with good; and holy souls owe much of their force and elevation to their combat with evil.

Here is the place to consider whether the wonderful providence of God, that disposes of the evil which man originates, has not so managed the results of evil for the triumph of good in the just, as to equal, if not to surpass, the amount of good and sanctity, taken atlogether, which might have existed had evil never been known. This is a large and profound question, which we hint at rather than attempt to solve. But here are a few points for consideration. First, the accumulation of virtue in one soul rises to much greater dignity, sanctity, and power, by reason of its unity, than if the same amount of virtue were distributed through a number of less virtuous souls. For the virtues and moral powers rise and multiply each other into higher degrees of sanctity when united in one soul, in proportion to the temptations overcome, the provocations mastered, and the obstacles vanquished. The faith,

the magnanimity, the humility, the generous charity that are perfected in the martyr, the confessor of faith, the afflicted, the pastor who gives his life for his flock, the sister of charity; and in all the just, patient, and generous souls of every class in life; accomplish the sanctifying of the soul as much through the combat with evil, and by the redressing of evil, as by their inward piety. But a single soul raised by the combat with evil to heroic virtue and sanctity is a host in herself in comparison with a thousand, and it may be than ten thousand, who might live but an ordinary life of piety, with no evil to contend with or to rectify. Abraham alone by his fidelity amidst an evil generation arose to such a friendship with God that he almost overbalanced the evil of five criminal cities. Had there been but five just men in all those five cities God would have spared them for the sake of Abraham. How long did God spare the kings and people of Juda for the sake of David His servant? Marvellous is the history of what the saints and just men of all times have accomplished, both on earth in combating, rectifying, and redressing evil; and with God in averting His just anger, and in obtaining His mercy and compassion over the doers of evil. They overcame evil with good, both in themselves and in the world around them.

What a picture has St. Paul given us of the Prophets, and to what a vast number of the heroes of the Gospel will that picture apply. "Who by faith conquered kingdoms, wrought justice, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, recovered strength from weakness, became valiant in battle, put to flight the armies of foreigners; women received their dead raised to life again. But others were racked, not accepting deliverance, that they might find a better resurrection. And others had trial of mockeries and stripes, moreover also of bands and prisons: they were stoned, they were cut asunder, they were tempted, they were put to death by the sword, they wandered about in sheepskins, in goatskins, being in want, distressed, afflicted: of whom the world was not worthy; wandering in deserts, in mountains, and in dens, and in caves of the earth. And all these being approved for the testimony of faith." These are God's heroes, doing all things and sacrificing all things, with a great spirit and a high soul of sanctity, for the cause of God. How much might this vivid picture of the contest of justice with evil be filled up from other great traits in

the heroes of Christ? But enough has been said to show how the great virtues and sanctities are wrought out through the presence of great evils.

Secondly, if evils had not existed, the greater part of the great virtues would have had no object for their exercise. Faith, hope, and charity, with religion and piety, would still have been the virtues to bring man to perfection; but where would have been the earthly and human obstacles by which they are tried and brightened? Where would be the persecutions in all their forms and shapes by which these virtues are raised to the heroic degree? But patience, fortitude, magnanimity, the combat with self, the mortification of the senses, the higher exercises of prudence and temperance, justice to the unjust, charity not only to the unkind but to the needy and the suffering, the defence of purity, the endurance of wrong, the vast efforts which the good make to rectify and redress evil, half the object of all our prayers, and a thousand other causes of good, which the presence of evil calls into action, would have no existence.

Thirdly, when we consider the amount of moral good that is caused by the presence of evil; and consider how much higher that good rises in the souls of the just through the trials occasioned by evil and the force of good-will brought out, through the generous conflict with evil; when, again, we consider how many of the nobler virtues owe their very existence to the evil which they have to endure or to surmount; it becomes indeed a grave question whether God has not drawn more moral good out of mankind at large by the permission of evil, than if evil had never existed. For however great and widespread that evil may be, especially in times like ours, we must take all the periods of time together, and remember that great trials of evil always produce great virtues, and that the accumulation of great sanctity and virtue in individual souls, and their great spiritual works and influences, counterbalance in the whole sum of sanctity, to a prodigious extent, the sum of sanctity that might have been, however more widely diffused, had there been no virtues created through the presence of evil to overcome evil with good.

What is the patience and long-suffering of God but His long-abiding mercy over His wilful and wayward children? What a picture St. Paul gives us of this long-abiding mercy? "Or despiseth thou the riches of His goodness, and patience, and long

suffering? Knowest thou not that the benignity of God leadeth thee to penance?" It is not God then who hardens the sinner, but the sinner who hardens himself, until his iniquity so deadens his interior affections that they can no longer receive the impress of the divine likeness. "But," continues St. Paul, "according to thy hard and impenitent heart, thou treasurest up to thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the just judgment of God, who will render to every one according to his works. To them, indeed, who according to patience in good work, seek glory and honour and incorruption, eternal life: but to them that are contentious, and obey not the truth, but give credit to iniquity, wrath and indignation. Tribulation and anguish upon every soul of man that worketh evil." It is not God, then, who stores up wrath, but man who treasures up the causes of wrath within himself, and who increases the store of tribulation and anguish with every new iniquity.

To sum up briefly what we have thus far said, in the doctrine of St. Thomas, the rewards agree with the will; because they are the good of which we are in search; but punishments disagree with the will, because they are the evils against which the will revolts. Sin comes from the will; the punishment rebounds against the will, because of sin. Hence St. Thomas argues that sin must be an incomparably greater evil than punishment. We endure a less evil to prevent a greater evil, we suffer the amputation of a limb to save the body. But God, who is the provident protector of all good, sends punishment in His wisdom to prevent the growth of the greater evil of sin, which is destructive of all good. Sin is evil by its native malice, punishment is but the consequence of that evil; and not merely that sensible punishment which deprives the man of corporal good, but that spiritual punishment which is the privation of light, of order, of grace, of beauty, and of glory. It is not punishment that makes us evil, but the sin that deserves punishment. For as the will is good through the good use of its gifts, it is made evil through the evil use of them; and punishment deprives us of the good things that we have used in an evil manner.

Man is the author of sin, God is the ordainer of punishment. Punishment is either the privation of good that He has given, or of good that He has promised, whether it be created good, such as we have by nature, or uncreated good, such as the beatific

vision. But the whole malice of evil is in the sin, not in the punishment; because sin is opposed to the uncreated good, that is, to God Himself. It is also opposed to the fulfilment of the divine will, that is, to the whole rule of good; and it is likewise opposed to the love of God, to that divine love whereby we love the divine good, both for its own sake, and for the sake of becoming partakers of that good. Sin is therefore opposed to all good, and to the whole order of good; and when we have thus far penetrated its character, it becomes clear and evident that sin is not because of punishment, but that punishment is because of sin.*

But besides the general opposition in which all sin whatsoever is opposed to the universal good, each sin in particular is opposed to some particular good, each vice is opposed to some special virtue. Punishment is therefore proportioned to the order, kind, and degree of good which each special vice or sin opposes and contradicts. This proportion is measured, as St. Thomas observes, by the nearer or remoter distance of the good that is contradicted or rejected from our supreme good and final end, an end which we made not for ourselves, but for which God has made us. The nearer a good is to God, the greater the good is, and the privation of it is the greater evil and the greater punishment. But the good things in man that are nearest to God are the graces and virtues, and especially the grace and virtue of purity and charity, by which we most resemble God. The next goods to these are the right order and disposition of the mind, especially with respect to faith, and the due subjection of our inferior powers to faith and right reason. After the health of the soul comes the health of the body and its soundness, as the responsive instrument of the soul. Finally, as being of the lowest degree and least value, come those external goods of the world that are given for the service of the virtues.

From this essential order and gradation of good, it follows that of all punishments the greatest that can befall a man, is to be excluded and cast off from his eternal beatitude. The next after this is the loss of grace and virtue, and consequently of the due and perfect operation of his powers. After this comes the loss of the order of the natural powers of his soul, and their consequent weakness for the right and proper performance of their offices

* S. Thoma, *Sum.* p. 1. q. 48. a. 6.

and duties. Then come the corporal evils and privations of the body. Last, and least of all, is placed the loss of the exterior goods of this world.

It would be natural to expect that men would most dread the greatest punishments, and would look upon the loss of their greatest good with the utmost horror. This would undoubtedly be the case if all men lived the life of faith and charity; but this is far from being the case. Most men live a natural rather than a supernatural life, and are not even faithful to their nature and reason. But the less a man has of moral good, the more blind he is to the greater good, to that good for which he is made. This blindness comes from his infidelity to the light of his mind, and to the admonitions of his conscience. But from this spiritual blindness the human will is often more reluctant to give up the inferior things of this world and of the body, than to surrender the greatest good of the soul. A large number, especially of those who live amidst a corrupting civilization, know and care a vast deal more about sensual and temporal good, than about intellectual, moral, spiritual, and divine good, and value them more. In this blind condition, the soul sees all things perversely, and puts the whole order of good upside down. The victims of this blindness look upon corporal privations as more grievous than spiritual privations, and on corporal punishments as more calamitous than spiritual punishments. To them the greatest of punishments is the outward humiliation of their reputation, the suffering of corporal afflictions, or the loss of temporal things. As to disorder of soul, the loss of spiritual light, the departure of grace, or the lowering of virtue, they are of small account to those who rarely think of God or of the soul. There are many men who will not have their low ways of thinking and judging interfered with by sage or saint, or by God himself. To put before their minds the eternal order of things, to show in that order how infinitely superior the divine good is above human good, and how infinitely greater eternal punishment is than temporal punishment, is to insult their pride as well as their life. The notion of denying the body to give freedom and elevation to the soul, is to them an offence and an absurdity. Their habits have perverted their reason.

These perverted views of the order of good, explain how men become scandalized with God as though His punishments were

unequal. They see the wicked man in vigour of body, and in the full flow of temporal prosperity, whilst just men often suffer, and are low in earthly advantages ; and they are tempted to conclude that the providence of God is at fault, and that He does not punish iniquity. But to the children of light these things are neither a wonder nor a scandal. They know that the body is for the soul ; that exterior is for the sake of interior good, and that inferior things are only good in so far as they help us to obtain interior and superior good. But whatever of inferior good they may have in themselves, when they hinder our superior good, they become blocks in the way, snares to the feet, and obstacles to our greater good, and therefore a cause of evil to us.

The Divine Disposer of all things knows both our strength and weakness. He knows what will help, and He knows what will hinder the advancement of each child of Adam towards his eternal good. He gives to the just man the temporal goods that will help him in virtue, and will turn to his everlasting advantage. He takes them away where He sees they will turn him to evil, or that he will turn them to evil, or will keep him from better things, or perhaps deprive him of his eternal happiness. This privation of temporal good is directed to eternal good. To the just man, therefore, these privations are no punishment, especially as he accepts them with good-will as being ordained by the providence of God.

But to leave these corporal and temporal goods to the unjust man is a heavy punishment, not because they are against his present will, but because they will lead to greater sins, and will draw him further from God, which will bring him by his own acts into greater punishments against his will. He is therefore less under the providence of God than the just man, who for his spiritual and eternal good is deprived of those corporal and temporal things. But if the unjust man is deprived of temporal goods, or suffers in body, it is a severe punishment to him ; he not only suffers against his will, but as these are his supreme goods, he has nothing better upon which to rest his soul. The just man is not punished because he suffers privation in submission to the will of God, which he makes his own ; but the unjust man suffers either for his past or for his present sins, and therefore his sufferings are a punishment, although that punishment may not heal him. If, however, he is left in prosperity,

these words of wisdom find their truth in him: "The creatures of God are turned into an abomination, and a temptation, and a snare to the feet of the unwise."

"According to the measure of the sin shall be the measure of the stripes." Trials sent to wean the soul from temptation, to strengthen her in patience, to detach her from self-love, and to purify her for greater gifts, when generous souls accept them with humility and thankfulness, are not punishments but loving providences. Real punishments are proportioned to the kind of sin, and the degree of malice in the will. A sin that turns the soul away from God as her supreme end, is mortal. A sin that does not turn the soul away from God as her supreme end, is venial. The punishment of the first is the privation of her final end, and of her spiritual life. The punishment of the second is a certain retardation of the soul's liberty in approaching to her divine good, and a certain slackening of the force of spiritual life, according to the nature and frequency of the sin. Venial sins make our progress more difficult, and those who love God know what a punishment that is.

Some punishments are ordained for the amendment of sinners, others for the expiation and purgation of souls repentant of their sins, be it in this world or in the next. For after sin is forgiven an expiation remains, an expiation that draws its efficacy from its union with the one, the only, the divine expiation, that was offered on the Cross. But the punishment of sinners who turn from God and never turn to Him again, who surrender the life of the soul to the creature, and never return to the life of justice, that awful punishment is as everlasting as the soul; not because God delights in punishment, but because He is just to the eternal order of things; just both to evil and to good. As in human justice the greater criminals are exiled from society, both to deter from like evils and to keep society pure; so in the divine justice, some are separated for ever from God and from the just because it is just, and is due to the nature of things, and is inevitable; also that the fear of like evils may keep other men from evil; and because, after the probation of the just is ended, society must then be kept pure and holy for evermore. It is therefore said of the heavenly Jerusalem: "There shall not enter into it anything defiled, or that worketh abomination or maketh a lie, but they that are written in the book of the Lamb."

But punishment is more than a privation, it is also an infliction. As the sinner not only turns from the Creator, but turns to the creature, as he not only deserts God but makes the creature his chief good, he not only loses what he has abandoned, but is punished by the creature, for whose sake he has quitted the law of his Creator. As he has brought the creature to ignominy by his abuse of it, the creature itself must become his punishment. Who fears to lose what he does not value? Who fears to lose what he so readily abandons? Can he who neither thinks nor cares for his eternal happiness be kept from evil through the fear of its loss? There must be other punishments therefore, such as the sinner will fear, punishments of sense from the creature, such as he cannot help understanding and fearing, even in the midst of his sins.

As there is a good due even from the creation to those who use it well and wisely, there is an evil due from the creation to those who use it wrongfully and foolishly. And as God has made it just by His promise, that they who love Him above all things, and devote themselves to Him, shall find their perfection and joy in Him; He has equally ordained that they who love the creature rather than the Creator, shall find their punishment from the creature. Having given their soul to the things beneath her, and inferior to her, against all order, reason, and nature, these same things shall become to her the active cause of suffering and misery. Hence in the Sacred Scriptures God so often threatens sinners, not only with the loss of heaven, but also with grievous sufferings from His creatures, changed through their folly into the instruments of His sovereign will and justice. "He will sharpen His severe wrath as a sword, and the world shall fight with Him against the foolish."*

As the imagination is a great element in seducing souls to evil, it is a great element in the punishment of evil. Think what it is for a soul to be stripped of all earthly surroundings, to be detached from the mortal body, and given up to the disorder and confusion wrought upon her in the course of an evil life. As that great disciple of the apostolic men, St. Irenæus, says: They held themselves aloof from the paternal light, and as they had power over their wills, they overpassed the law of liberty with iniquity.

* For the whole argument see St. Thomas, *Summa contra Gentiles*, L. III. c. 140—145.

God has, therefore, prepared a dwelling for them that suits their dispositions; as they despised the light, He has prepared darkness for them with befitting punishment.* Memory, the sense of loss, and the baleful sufferings within and around their spirits, must, therefore, be to them in place of light. There can be nothing earthly and nothing heavenly to take the soul from off herself. There is no justice to keep the powers of the soul in order, no charity to keep them in unity, no good to keep them in pleasant exercise. The defection of evil has loosened the whole spirit into disorder and confusion. The capacity for infinite good is vacant of good; the living subject is void even of the hope of her living object. The fallen spirit has not even the light that illuminates the eternal good, but only the reason why both the light and the good are lost to her for ever. Every disordered and distracted faculty of that spirit wants its good object; the soul is, therefore, dark, loveless, dreary, full of fears and alarms; and the inextinguishable conflagration from the interminable disorders of the unchangeable evils among which that soul is placed, and of which she makes a part, destroys without destroying, because those spirits are immortal in immortal pains. The worm of conscience dieth not, the fire is not extinguished. But what gives to the worm its sting, and to the fire its force, is the evil in the soul that rejects the everlasting good for which she was created. The justice that shone in her mind she would not have in her heart, and behold, that justice is with her for ever!

There is an admirable communion of all holy spirits and souls, who are united in God for their mutual good and happiness. And there is a portentous communion of all evil spirits and souls, who work together to mutual punishment and misery. The good help each other in many ways, invisibly as well as visibly. This is one of the grand mysteries of faith. The malignant torment each other in many ways. This is one of the great mysteries of evil. The general tradition of mankind from its earliest records accords with the Sacred Scriptures in the belief, which from Genesis to the Apocalypse, exhibit the good angels ministering to men of good will, whilst the apostate angels tempt men to evil, strive for their ruin, and insult them in their misery. The spiritual world is close upon us, and only separated from our vision by the earthly things that veil our spirits. When Eliseus

* S. Irenæus, *Adversus Hæreses*, L. IV. c. 39.

obtained by his prayer, the opening of the eyes of his servant, he saw the armies of the Lord encamped around them more numerous and mighty than the army of Assyria. And St. Paul tells the faithful, not that you *will* come, but that "you *are* come . . . . to the company of many thousands of angels . . . . and to the spirits of the just made perfect." On the other hand, St. Peter warns us: "Be sober and watch; because your adversary the devil, like a roaring lion, goeth about seeking whom he may devour. Whom resist ye strong in faith; knowing that the same affliction befalls your brethren who are in the world." Everywhere the Scriptures show that the fallen angels are the seducers of mankind. It is accordant, therefore, with eternal justice, and ordained in the divine decrees, that the just, who have accepted the help and guidance of holy angels and the examples of the saints, should enter their heavenly society; and that the wicked, who have followed the evil angels in their seductions, should follow them to their punishment.

Many persons devote themselves in these educated days to the wonders, beauties and sublimities of Nature; but much of this study and contemplation is unreasonable, because they think not of the Divine Author of these wonderful works. But when they turn to works of art, they act reasonably by going to the mind of the artist, and think as much of him as of his work. What a creation of beauty and sublimity they would find, if they devoted themselves to the wonderful works of God's mercy. But like all the profounder truths, they are paradoxes to the natural man, however clear to the spiritual man. For example, were it not for the pains, trials, and afflictions of this mortal life, that force men back upon themselves, pierce them with sorrow, soften them to the sense of their inward wants, and compel them to ascend to God for relief, how small would be the number to escape the final evil. But when the divine mercy makes the too attractive flower of this life to die among the thorns, and the spirit shrinks home to herself, and there finds God awaiting her return; the first fear of His presence changes to attraction, and the eternal beauties begin to dawn upon her. Sufferings and sorrows are the medicines of the soul; sharp afflictions are the surgical remedies, cutting out the gangrene of pride, and cleansing away the humours of self-love.

The sufferings of souls are chiefly the result of evil habits,

either conscious or unconscious to the sufferer. Often indeed these habits are unconscious, lying deep and hidden from sight, for want of that humility that brings them to self-knowledge, and secures their departure. For self-love is the root and cause of all spiritual maladies, it weakens and inflames the soul, making her keenly sensitive to the suffering of nature. If, observes the eminent writer whom we are quoting in this and subsequent paragraphs,* if you inflict an equal amount of suffering on two persons, one of whom has ten degrees of self-love, and the other ten degrees of the love of God; and if you multiply the ten degrees of weakness by the ten degrees of strength, you will find that the one who has ten degrees of self-love will suffer a hundred times more than the one who has the ten degrees of the love of God. This is no theory, but the experience of those who have the guidance of souls.

As pain is providentially ordained to enforce attention to the wounds and maladies of the body, and to compel us to seek their cure; so the pains of conscience warn us of the presence of evil in the soul, and enforce self-examination, conversion and repentance. Conscience warns the will before the act to deter us from evil acts, and after the evil act is done, it inflicts trouble and distress. "God hath ordained," says St. Augustine, "that every disorderly soul should be her own executioner." Whilst the wounded body suffers pain there is yet hope, the vital elements are striving to restore the injured part to life and soundness. If the conscience ceases to inflict pain on the wounded soul, the evil has hardened and grown inveterate; there is loss of sensibility to evil, paralysis of spirit, and the numbness of death. "The man is tranquil," says St. Isidore, "from ignorance of himself, and insolent from ignorance of God."

The souls of just men suffer in their season, but with incalculable profit to themselves. How different in kind and remote in spirit are the sufferings of the just from those of the unjust. They suffer like holy Job, in hope, in an elevated spirit, and for their greater purification. They suffer but to gain a greater abstraction from selfish weakness; to make a nobler surrender of themselves to God; to the deepening of their faith; to a more invigorating generosity; to the deepening of self-knowledge and humility; and to the drawing with intenser affection towards

* Rosmini. *Discorso Dell Amore Divino.*

that Supreme Good in whom all sufferings find an end. The principle of the commutation of forces is far from being limited to material things; because all activity conveyed into material things has its origin in spiritual powers, "from invisible things all things visible were made." Holy souls have the power of quietly transforming inflicted sufferings into sanctity. This is the mystery of the Cross.

There are even causes of suffering, and of great suffering, to pure and humble souls, that the sensual and proud cannot understand. They suffer at the spectacle of sins in a way that the lovers of God can alone understand, and their sufferings as well as prayers are expiatory offerings for the conversion of sinners. They suffer from the sight of their own weakness. They suffer from delay of the better things that make them perfect. They suffer from every cloud that comes between their spirit and the view of God. They suffer from the hope delayed of the eternal vision. They suffer, as none but they can understand, from the strain upon their nature through the expanding influence of the fire of divine charity. Their sufferings arise from no pain of evil, troubling their peace and rest within, but from the pains of divine love working in a soul still imprisoned and confined by the earthly body.

How can any one say that the just and the unjust suffer alike? The just soul suffers from external evils only, and suffers them in peace and charity; whilst the unjust soul suffers not only from external evils, but much more from internal evils, and suffers with misery. The just soul suffers with hope and resignation, looking to the speedy end of all suffering. The unjust soul suffers fruitlessly and hopelessly, suffers unhappily and unresignedly, seeing no termination to suffering, unless God grant the grace of conversion. The just soul suffers in God, and in the upholding strength of God. The unjust soul suffers in herself, having no spiritual strength, in the weakness of wounded pride, and with the self-love that sharpens sensibility to suffering. The just soul is conscious of the secret benedictions which God conceals in her sufferings, detaching her from self, and drawing her affections from things perishable to things imperishable. The unjust soul has all her trials aggravated from the bitter root of evil within her, with fears in the imagination and forebodings of a dreadful future. The just soul looks from the centre of her life unto the sure light of

God, and muses on the divine promise: "I am with thee in thy troubles; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." But "the wicked man is proud all his days, the sound of dread is always in his ears: and when there is peace he always expecteth treason." "Such," says St. Gregory on the text, "are the suspicions and terrors of guilty consciences. What is music to the ears of the just, is to them the discordant sounding of evil. They fear when no one pursueth. The falling leaf, or the murmuring stream, may inspire them with alarm. The just man is in peace whilst the conscience of the wicked will not leave him in security. The very walls that hide him seem to know his secret. Though no one shares his secret, yet were he buried in a tomb of the desert, his conscience gives him no rest from fear."

The soul that loves God has only reverential fears. She has but little delight in this world, because her heart is with her treasure. But the unjust man is at war with his better nature, and with the nobler good intended for him; he has no delight beyond this world, and every attack of disease, every touch of calamity, brings the end of life in view with alarm, with the anticipated sense of loss, with the bitings of remorse, with memories too bitter to dwell upon, and with servile fears. Invisible powers, strange though obscure mysteries, are about the dying man, whose hopes are left with his body in the grave.

In a word, to evil men all the evils of this life are pure evils; whilst to the man of good will they are changed by their contact with his good will into a hundredfold of good. To the man of grace and good will therefore the Psalmist sings with confidence that he is protected by God: "He will overshadow thee with His shoulders: and under His wings thou shalt trust. His truth shall compass thee with a shield: thou shalt not be afraid of the terror of the night, of the arrow that flieth about in the day, of the business that walketh in the dark; of invasion, or of the noonday devil. A thousand shall fall at thy side, and ten thousand at thy right hand: but these evils shall not come nigh to thee. But thou shalt consider with thine eyes and shalt see the reward of the wicked."

LECTURE X.

WHY MAN WAS NOT CREATED PERFECT.

"When that which is perfect is come, that which is in part shall be done away."—1 CORINTHIANS xiii. 10.

A CRY is sometimes heard from unbelieving hearts, which is a cry of self vindication, and is expressed in terms like these: "Why are we so weak and unfinished? If God is indefinitely good, why are we left exposed to evil and misery?" Sometimes men who are weak in faith are likewise heard to murmur, but in notes more hushed and low, and the burden of their plaint is this: "Why did not God so make us that we might not sin?" These cries rose to a clamour with the Valentinians in the second century of Christianity, and were replied to by the great Bishop and Martyr of Lyons, St. Irenæus, the disciple of the apostolic men. They were raised anew by the Manichæans of the fourth and fifth centuries, and were replied to by St. Basil, St. Augustine and Titus of Bozra.

The question is of great extent, embracing the whole nature of intellectual creation as well as the whole economy of God. For its solution we must look not only to the light of reason but to the light of revelation, and when we have brought these two lights to bear upon the subject, we shall not fail to obtain a profound instruction, both as to the nature of the rational creature, and the character of God's external operations. No question can more thoroughly explain the infinite distance between the Creator and the creature, or give more light upon the wisdom of God as it is manifested in the ways of His providence and the dispensations of His grace. The question has been delayed to this Tenth Lecture expressly with the view of your being prepared for its consideration by the principles already put forth and explained; and

although the compass of a lecture is but brief for so vast a theme, yet even this limited extent of consideration cannot fail to strengthen the minds of those who love to enlarge their souls and animate their piety by reflecting on the wonderful ways of God.

As the nature of God is goodness, as His power is omnipotence, and His work is mercy; we must expect such a plan from His eternal mind for the formation of His intelligent creatures as shall exceed in goodness, magnificence and mercy, all that our weak and limited minds could by the light of our reason in our present state anticipate, especially whilst obscured by earth, sensuality and sin. As God is most simple, because most perfect, we must also expect the eternal plan to be one and simple as it exists in the mind of God. But to us who are far removed from the open presence of God, are chained to our bodily senses, and live among countless shadows and obscurations, the wonderful design of God can only be seen in part, and its execution anticipated in part, as beheld in obscure lights that reach us through the veils and curtains of created things.

Let us return for a moment to the Book of Job: "Behold, God is high in strength and there is no one like to Him among the lawgivers. Who can search out His ways? or who can say to Him: Thou hast wrought iniquity. Remember that thou knowest not His work, which men have sung. All men see Him, every one beholdeth Him afar off. Behold God is great, conquering knowledge, the number of His years cannot be reached." Who can search out His ways, who "inhabiteth unapproachable light," and whom, "no man hath seen at any time?" Yet all men see Him afar off, they see Him in the things that bear witness to Him. We see His truth in the light of our reason; His law in the voice of our conscience; His justice in our sense of wrong doing; His promise of greater good in our aspirations towards better things. The testimony of God's presence is in the soul of every man, he has only to enter into himself, and he will find it there. Man would not be at all, were God not with him, and he with God; however secret from mortal sight that eternal presence may be. And he certainly would not be man, unless the witness of God were in his conscience.

But "we know not His work, which men have sung." The devout prophets, poets, philosophers and theologians, have made God and His works the highest theme of their contemplation; but

who has seen God's side of His works? The sun's side of the cloud is luminous, but its earthly side is dark. Who has seen God at His work of creation? Who has seen the Word of God within the Father's bosom, through whom all things are made? Who has seen the light of God's mind in which He beholds all things? Who has seen His Holy Spirit of wisdom, "reaching from end to end of all things mightily, and disposing of all things sweetly?" We are but children of a short time, born in the midway of things, new comers into a world that is yet strange to us, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be. As the bird in the egg we are still in the first and immature stage of our existence; and often confound shadows with realities, and are startled at fancies and fears which make the wise in heaven smile.

To get a partial sight of a piece here and a piece there of some grand design will not give us the mind of the artist. The men in the ranks do not see the order in which the great army is marshalled, that is in the mind of the commander. If you enter the works of some great engineer, and begin to handle tools and machines that you don't understand, you may not only get wounded, but may have your limbs crushed for your ignorant interference. But if you came to the conclusion that the evil is in the works, and not in your own rash conduct, you will show more folly in your judgment than rashness in your acts. The man who has never ruled anything but his family, will know but little of the mind that governs a kingdom; and the man who rules a kingdom will have but a very limited knowledge of the mind of God, who governs the universe. What do these men of new lights, with the freshest theory of the universal plan in their mind, know either of the universe, or of the Divine Ruler of the universe? They have only got the old light of the old human reason in a twist, that makes it look like new. That terminal ray which has entered the mind from the universal light, in a condition so thin and attenuated, after being refracted from its primal purity through the medium of created things, has not the strength and compass that will enable us to embrace both God and His works.

To see God's works as God beholds them, demands his infinite vision. But you are as yet confined to your earthly place at a vast depth below the regions of light; are confined as it were to a single bay within the obscure crypts of that glorious palace of the universe, which God has built for His delight and glory; and you

must wait until the Divine Architect comes to teach you, before you can understand the unity, the order and extent of its design, and its magnificent arrangements.

"There was none like to Him among the law-givers." In what condition art thou, then, oh creature of a day, to judge the decrees of the Divine Legislator? Hast thou entered into the unapproachable light in which God dwelleth? Hast thou sat in council with Him? Dost thou not know that the Eternal King has His royal reserves of wisdom, as well as his published laws? He has taught us by His works, He has taught us by His prophets, last of all He has taught us by His Son. But He has not equalled us to Himself in knowledge. For as far as God is above the creature, so far is His light above our light, and His knowledge above our knowledge. "Peradventure," says holy Job, "thou wilt comprehend the steps of God, and wilt find out the Almighty perfectly. He is higher than heaven, and what wilt thou do? He is deeper than hell, and how wilt thou know? . . . . He knoweth the vanity of men."

"The Lord is high, conquering our knowledge." God conquers our knowledge when He shows us the limits of our reason, and the errors into which our senses involve us. He conquers our knowledge when he teaches us to seek truth from Him by faith, and greater knowledge by an humble dependence on His word. Even the most enlightened of us cannot penetrate through the forms and qualities of things into that secret force which constitutes their substance. Nor can we see how they exist in the power of God, and not in their own. Under every order, species, and individual thing, be it the petal of a flower, the wing of a fly, or the soul of man, there is a mystery too profound for either sense or mind to fathom. But when we rest on the God of truth, we rest upon all truth, both what He generously teaches us, and what He royally reserves for the eternal day.

If we see certain great principles of truth by direct perception, they can only be applied through a process of reasoning that marks the limitation of our vision. If by the faculty of comparison we gain many clear and certain conclusions, in how many cases is the result of our mental labours left in doubt and uncertainty. We see not the broad full prospect of truth, but only the procession of truth after truth, won to our understanding by thought after thought. We have not seen the ocean of truth;

but only the rain-drops wafted to us from that ocean; not the light of truth in its fountain, where all truth is one and indivisible, but only certain terminal and disparted rays of truth. We see not that truth in its native purity, but as invested with an imagery befitting our compound nature of soul and body, of mind and earthly sense. Truths that seem wide apart to our limited intelligence, however united in themselves, we often find it hard to conciliate, because we want the perception of that intermediate truth in which they are united. Hence difficulties arise to us which God alone can conquer, by infusing a greater light into our minds. For although the whole light of the object of our thought is all around us, and is not farther from us than the God of truth; yet our mind is limited, and our understanding, immersed in sense, and often alienated from God, and crossed by the shadows projected from ourselves, is only sufficiently illuminated to touch this and that point, that looms through the mists and shadows raised from sensible things, that veil the object in its completeness from our eyes. Thus compassed with obscurity, we are inclined to imagine with vividness, not the truth that is open to us, so much as what we feel within ourselves, and to judge what is beyond us according to our own temper and disposition.

What remains for us but that, by going out of ourselves, we listen to the voice of eternal truth, revealing to our faith what we see not with our reason. The revelation of God is the abundant communication of what our reason cannot reach. Faith is the reasonable and consistent adhesion of our mind to the Author of all truth. If the chief sum of our human knowledge comes of faith in our fellow-men, and the affairs of human life rest on faith in each other, why should we hold back our faith from the God of truth, when He makes known to us what of ourselves we cannot see, until, in reward for our faith, the vision of truth shall be opened to our enraptured gaze. Faith is the preordained remedy for our natural ignorance of divine things, and we ought to be content with divine authority, and to bear our own ignorance with patience and peace. This just order of things God has measured out for our state of trial. It is our "reasonable service to God well pleasing;" the sacrifice of our mental pride, and the proper remedy for our pride of heart.

The bent of pride is to independence. This morbid tendency makes the man restless and impatient under his present ignorance,

and ambitious to have the command of knowledge. He will not see that knowledge commands him. Vain of the surface knowledge of what falls under the senses, and of his dominion over material things, he thinks to make himself independent of the authority of God, when He delivers the eternal truth. Proud of an imaginary liberty, and not seeing that it chains him to his inferior nature with a hard servitude, he looks with a kind of horror to a revelation that subjects his mind and will to the divine authority, and compels him to realize that God is both his master and his teacher. He scorns the truth that comes through faith, because it is the gift of the humble, and because he cannot ascribe it to his own fountain. But the humility of the humble, which is the most generous of all virtues, and the reasonable service of the whole man to truth, knows and confesses the restricted limits of man's reason, and disposes the soul to faith, and leads the reason up to that truth which the eternal wisdom reveals. Then God conquers our knowledge, and helps our submission to the truth through the victorious strength of His grace. "In His hand He hideth the light, and commandeth it to come again. He showeth His friends concerning it, that it is His, and that they may come up to it."

If you could see God's creative and providential action, moving from eternity through the ages unto eternity, you might have some notion of the divine plan of creation. If you could see all the generations of the children of Adam pass before you, and could compass the operations of God throughout the extent of the human family, you might know something of the breadth of the eternal design. If you could scale the heights of heaven, and behold the just made perfect, and then descend into the abyss, and behold the refuse of humanity in its failure; and if you could see the prodigious provisions of light and grace, beyond the native powers of man, by the help of which the blessed have ascended to God; and then see the wonderful helps that the unhappy who have fallen from God have rejected; you might know something of the height and depth of God's moral government of the human race.

But, as it is, what do you know of any one's internal history beyond your own. And how much do you know of your own? How far have you measured in detail, or taken the total sum, of the providential gifts, and the divine influences, which under God's

guiding hand have come to you? How much have you accepted, or how much of all have you neglected or rejected? How much do you know of the conduct of your mind towards God's light? Or of your conduct of your will towards His grace? Or of your general conduct towards His providence? The waste of opportunity given to men is enormous. What just and true distinction have you made between God's part in you, and what is justly and fairly your own? The whole question of human justice towards God lies in this interrogation. But if you know so little of yourself, how can you expect to know the height and depth, the length and breadth of God's eternal plan in creating the human race, except so far as it has pleased Him to teach you.

Nature cannot be violated. Man cannot exist before he is created; he cannot be called to the divine council to say how he shall be made, or to what end he shall be made. Were he made, as some in their blind conceit imagine they ought to be made, he would be something very much less than man. Yet no one really wishes to exchange his personal existence for that of another, however gifted, for that would be his own annihilation. What he really wants is to better his own condition, and that is in his power if he chooses to accept the means. The reaches of his mind and of his heart are unlimited, and he has only to bend his stubborn nature down to God, to receive the means by which he may advance to the infinite and eternal good. In these facts, written in every sincere conscience, the plan of God becomes manifest, and it rebukes the presumption of those men, who complain of their imperfect nature instead of working to obtain its perfection.

Nothing more clearly proves the wisdom of one order of things than the absurdities that present themselves in the assumption of one the directly opposite. Instructed by the previous lectures, you will be able to enter into the sense, or you may more truly call it the nonsense, of the following supposition. Let us indulge the querulous man with the absurd fancy that he might have existed before his existence, and might have made himself in a better way. It is excessively ridiculous, but let us place the impossibility for a ground of argument.

In the first place, this self-creator can have no claim upon God, he must make himself for himself, he must begin and end in himself and what self is without God, we have already seen. In the second place, he will have no right to the creatures of God, and how is

he to get on without them? In the next place, he could not give himself those immortal gifts that, in the nature of things, belong to God alone. Where would be the image of God? Where that trinity of powers in one spiritual substance which has its glory in its divine original? Where would be the light of reason, and the principles of unchangeable truth? God alone can implant them, as created reflections of His own eternal truth, as He does implant them in every soul at its creation. Where would be the appetite for universal good? Having nothing in him greater than himself, to what greater good could he aspire? Where would be the capacity for eternal things? And if it were there, how could it be provided for? Made for himself, his capacity could not extend beyond himself. Having no choice between himself and things greater than himself, where would be his freedom? Subject and object at once, without any personal distinction between them, there could be no free movement between one and the other. The whole work, for man it could not be, must eventuate in a dull stupidity. Where would be the light of justice and the law of conscience, those reflections of the divine order and eternal justice of things? These can only be implanted in souls by God to guide them to imperishable good. Where, again, would be the spiritual provisions to nourish the heart and the life? And where those increasing radiations of the Divine Spirit, that give faith, and hope, and the love of eternal things? Self-love must be of necessity the principle of that self-created one, for what other principle could the self-creator implant? But self-love with nothing better to feed upon is the last degree of misery. A creature made on no higher type than its own subjective existence, and so shorn of the lights and hopes of better things, must be an irrational, unconscienced, lawless, irresponsible, and idiotic thing. It could have none of those nobler gifts whose first principle is in God. It would be a hopeless bundle of chaotic sensations without an object. Yet, strange as it may sound to good Christian ears, there are men who in the name of science go so far in their folly as to attempt to remake themselves by the process of separating themselves from God. But God upholds them in His creative hand nevertheless, and that with infinite patience; for were it otherwise, their separation would be their annihilation. This is the moral of our otherwise absurd supposition.

The reasons why God did not make man perfect, as far as we are able to see them, may be stated under these six heads.

1. There is but one uncreated Being, who is absolutely perfect with every kind of perfection, and He is the reason and the cause of all things that exist. As man is a creation of God, and is made from nothing, he must of necessity be limited, and as a limited being he must be changeable. As a creature he must also of necessity be dependent on his Creator. A being so independent as to want for nothing, and to be incapable of failure, would not be man but God. But a limited and changeable creature must, by the nature of things, be in itself imperfect.

2. It is an immeasurably greater work on the part of God, and is incomparably more honourable to the creature, that God should have made man to be a cause in himself, than if his Creator had been the one and only cause of his perfection. We perhaps seldom realize the grandeur of a creative act which puts the rational creature into his own power, with freedom to originate his own actions, so that with the helps given him by God he may work out his own perfection. It is this free power of causation implanted in his will that makes him the originator of his own acts; it is a certain sub-creative power that God has given to his creature, by which he most resembles God. But as this will, or power of causation, belongs to the creature, it is essentially limited, and therefore changeable. As it is placed between superior good and many kinds of inferior good, it is free to choose superior good or to turn to inferior good, and to cleave with affection to one or to the other. But man is perfected by willing superior good, and is deteriorated by willing inferior good; and as both himself and his will are made from nothing, unless his will is divinely strengthened, his natural tendency is to those inferior things that are nearest to his native nothingness.

3. The perfection of what is created is not in itself, but in its final end. Nothing is made for itself, but for something greater than itself. God has an end in view in all that He creates, or He would not be the Eternal Wisdom. But the end of man is God. He can only, therefore, be perfected when he reaches his final end in God. For this end he bears the image of God. No image has glory in itself, but only from the original which it represents. And this living image is made to be filled according to its capacity with the power and glory of God. But this implies a complete subjection of the soul to God. In the nature of things, therefore, man

cannot be perfect in himself, he can only be perfect when he is united with God.

4. The primary end of man's creation is the glory of God in the manifestation of His divine attributes. But as these external manifestations are made to limited creatures, they are distinct and progressive. First the power of God is manifested in the act of creation; next the wisdom of God is manifested in the order of providence, by which one thing is made to advance and complete another. Then to the rational creature made for God, the light of truth and justice is communicated, which bring that rational creature into relations with the invisible and eternal world. And after the rational man is formed, he still has need of the supernatural gifts of faith and charity, to bring his mind and heart into direct communion with God. Thus the natural manifestations of God to His creature are followed by His divine and supernatural manifestations. But the grand and final manifestation of God to His intelligent creature, is when, in reward for his fidelity, He manifests Himself by the beatific vision.

5. The due counterpart to the progressive manifestation of God to His creature, is the progressive advancement of the creature towards God. Man is made with the noble attribute of free will, that he may co-operate with God in accomplishing his own perfection, he is therefore a moral being, and this is the explanation of his conscience. But he is made from nothing, and the distance between nothingness and God is infinite. Justice and truth require that man should know the nothingness from which he is taken, and that he should clearly know that he owes all things to God, otherwise his mind would be filled with the most destructive error, and his heart with most destructive injustice. He has therefore received his creation on the verge of nothingness, with little substance of good, but with great capacity for good. He is made both perfect and imperfect; perfect in capacity for infinite good, but imperfect in not having reached that good; because he cannot be really perfect until he has reached the unchangeable good. For God has given him a complete nature to be perfected by what is above his nature, and above all created and creatable natures. God has given him this great capacity for what is greater than himself, and the free principle of action, that he might have the unspeakable privilege and dignity of co-operating with God in the glorious work of perfecting himself, by corresponding willingly

with all the gifts of nature and grace, and with all the manifestations of goodness and mercy that God shall vouchsafe to him. By thus advancing from light to light, from grace to grace, and from virtue to virtue, man is able to reach an incomparably greater perfection than if he had been made as perfect as he could be from the first, without the free exercise of his own will and conduct.

6. The very fact that man is made for what is infinitely greater than he is, that he is made for God, and not for himself, implies that he must be imperfect before he can be perfect. As an intelligent and moral being, made to know, to will, and to love, yet brought into existence from nothing, he must be tried before he can be approved. His nature must receive divine elements of light and power, before he can ascend in mind and heart towards the divine good, and he must show that he can be faithful to the divine good he receives whilst yet on trial, before he is united to the unchangeable good for evermore. In his responsible days of probation, instead of being at discord with the eternal truth, or with the divine elements of grace, he must freely and willingly respond to them, and make them actively his own, by the exercise of those supernatural virtues of which they are the principle. He has then within him those divine powers that will bring him to God, and to his perfection.

It is the distance of man, therefore, from the final object of his existence that makes him imperfect, and is the cause of his unhappiness. But every step which he takes towards God advances him on the way of perfection, and diminishes his unhappiness. It is not those who are in their due order towards God, and who give their hearts to Him, who are dissatisfied with their present condition, or complain of being unhappy ; but it is those only who are unfaithful to God, and who vainly seek for their chief end in themselves. And here let me make a remark which is of vital importance. If we see such a vast amount of moral misery in the present state of the world, of a moral misery which is incomparably the greatest of all miseries, and either causes or deepens every other kind of suffering, we may ascribe no small part of it to the exclusion of the principle of final causes from the sphere of modern thought, and to the bold asserting of man's self-sufficiency. These destructive methods of thinking percolate into every kind of writing and reach every kind of reader, soaking into and sapping the foundations of religious truth in minds innumerable. Yet in

the practical affairs of this life, men invariably act on the principle of final causes, they shape their means to their ends, and the intermediate ends are made subordinate to the chief end they have in view.

But man himself has a final end, to which all other ends are subordinate ; and nothing can be more irrational than to exclude that end from human thought and conduct. The old philosophies, as Varro has shown, made the chief good of man the first object of their thought and inquiry. But in these disjointed times, even when not theoretically yet practically, men of science, humanitarians, statesmen, politicians, political economists, and even literary men, lose sight of the one great object for which man is born into this world, and leave him by implication, when not of set purpose, to his own self-sufficiency. Then the loss of the light of distinction between the objective truth and the subjective man, which is the radical weakness of the modern infidel philosophies, has contributed greatly to propagate the absurd notion that man is self-sufficient, both for his thinking and his conduct. Yet the final end of man is the first motive of his existence, and his progress towards that end is the measure of his manhood, and the secret of his content and happiness. Even on the ground of humanity, therefore, the final end of man ought to be the prime regulator of his thought, conduct and affairs. For the discarding of final causes is the loss of wisdom in thought, and of prudence in action, and to treat man as though he had no end beyond this world, is to do the utmost violence to his nature.

When a man grows querulous over his own imperfect nature, he would do well to settle with himself, before he complains of his Creator. Let him reflect how much truth he might have had, and has not, because when offered to his knowledge he gave not to it the attention of his mind and will. Let him reflect how much good he might have had, and has it not, because, when the occasion offered, he failed in courage and let it pass. Let him examine and consider how far and how often he has failed to give that wise and just direction to his will that was within his power and not beyond his lights ; he may then obtain some notion of those latent powers within him that he has let go to rust and decay for the want of due exercise and discipline. If this examination shows him how much more perfect he might have been than he is, let him not accuse God but his own will. After which he

may take to his heart these words of Albert the Great: "Nothing richer can be offered to God than a good will; for the good will is the originator of all good and is the mother of all virtues: whosoever begins that good will has secured all the help he needs for living well."*

"Why are we not created in such a manner," asks St. Basil, "that from our nature we should be unable to sin, and should not have the power to do so though we willed it?" And to this he answers: "You do not think you have good servants when you are compelled to chain them; but you think them good when they do the duties they owe you freely and with good will. Nor can God be pleased with what is done on compulsion, but only with what is done from virtue. But virtue cannot come of necessity, it must come of free will, and this will is your own, and depends for its exercise on yourself. He, therefore, who would complain of his Maker for not making him so that he might not sin, must of course prefer an unreasonable to a reasonable nature, and would choose an immovable existence, incapable of better things, before an existence that is free and capable of action."†

It is obvious that a creature made from nothing, and limited by nature, cannot be made incapable of sin, unless made without free will. This point has been fully treated in the lectures on evil. But had we been created without free will, we could never have subjected ourselves to God. We could not have made the divine will our own. We could have made no generous offering either of ourselves or of anything to God. We could have done nothing to the glory of God, or towards our own perfection. We could not have even used our reason, or have searched into any truth. We should have been incapable of any virtue whatsoever. As St. Basil intimates, we should have been fixed, immovable, passive, and unchangeable, just as we were created. On the other hand, were we not placed between good and evil, and with our will open to both, we should lose the occasion for the exercise of the stronger virtues that make us strong; the prudence that guards against evil, the vigour that resists temptation, the manifold toil of pursuing good; the fortitude that resists, the patience that endures, and the magnanimity that rises above evil. We should know nothing of that joy of self-sacrifice that gives splendour to the virtues. The

* Albertus Magnus, *De Adhærendo Deo*, c. 11.

† S. Basil, *Hom. Quod Deus non est auctor malorum*, c. 7.

virtues that strengthen the soul would not exist, and what virtues still remained would languish and lose their vigour.

To be without a free will is to be without merit or deservings of any kind, and to have nothing that deserves esteem or reward. A will without freedom is not a will, a soul without a will is not a soul, and a man without a soul is not a man. To be free in one's will is to be the sovereign of one's self; and to have this intelligent dominion over one's own actions is the proof of a spiritual nature, and in this we resemble God. "God has honoured us," says Titus of Bozra, "by so making us in His image, that as God is good in the freedom of His nature, we might honour Him with the freedom of our will; and that by abstaining from sin, whilst capable of sinning, our free will might do honour to virtue."*

The perfection of man begins with his sanctification, advances with his greater sanctification, and is consummated in the beatific vision of God. His advancement, therefore, in perfection is to be looked for in the progress of his nature from nothingness to God. "First that which is earthly, then that which is heavenly." First the body, then the soul, then by divine condescension the light and grace from heaven, to raise the soul above herself, and bring the mind and will into supernatural relations with God. Then the mind enters into the light of God by faith, and the will into the power of God by hope and love. And by religion the will is subject to God, and worships Him in obedience to the divine ordinances in which He has shown that He would be worshipped, and receives the sacraments in which He wills that we should receive His graces. And as light comes upon light, and grace on grace, the faithful man advances from virtue to virtue, perfecting his sanctification, and preparing himself for his final union with God.

But if God were to make us perfect from the beginning of our existence, what kind of a perfection would that be? There would be no virtue; no co-operation in our own sanctification; no triumph over the powers of evil; no mutual working of light and free understanding; no corresponding action of grace and free will, no works of faith, love, and patience to be crowned with beatitude; no crowning of the moral good in which God crowns the operations of His own gifts.

* Titus Bostren, *Contra Manichæos*, L. II.

If we did not advance by sensible and marked degrees from the animal to the rational, and from the rational to the spiritual life, and thence again to higher degrees of spiritual good, we should confound our own nature with the light and grace of God, and the workings of grace with the workings of nature. We should never distinguish between those supernatural and exuberant gifts of God and the feeble powers that belong to our nature. We should claim the divine gifts as a part of our nature, and thus fall into a most delusive egotism, as well as into a terrible falsehood and injustice. We could not have that beautiful humility which so much consists in the confession of the gifts of God. For it is by being first without the divine gifts, and feeling how poor and imperfect we are without them, and by then receiving them, that we know with most practical knowledge what we are of ourselves; and what with the grace of God. But we pass from nature to the gifts of God by a way so visible, marked, and distinct, that we must see unmistakably that nature comes by birth, and grace from heaven upon our nature, and can never claim the gifts of grace as though they were the provisions of our nature.

Again, as we are conscious of our free will, and conscious in our experience that we are free to accept or to reject the help of God, to co-operate or not to co-operate with the gifts of grace, we are not in the same peril of confounding the divine gifts with the powers of our nature, as we should be, were we created perfect in nature and endowed with perfect grace at one and the same instant. Thus we escape the danger of that worst of errors, that error of inexpiable pride and injustice in the confounding of the two, which caused the angels to fall from God.

In the course of his voluminous works, and especially in that against Julian the Pelagian, St. Augustine has put forth three reasons why man in his mortal nature must be exposed to the danger of sin. He first lays down the principle that God alone is by nature immortal, quoting St. Paul who teaches, that He "alone inhabiteth immortality," from which it follows that man was never immortal by nature, but only in virtue of a divine gift. God alone is absolutely pure and holy by nature, and therefore by nature incapable of sin. "God cannot admit sin in Himself, because He cannot abandon His own divine nature; for there is

nothing better than Himself to which He could adhere, and by the abandoning of which he could sin."*

The second of the great Doctor's reasons has been anticipated, but we will give its substance in confirmation of our own. As every creature emerges from nothingness, and carries the seeds of change within him, and as he therefore labours under his native inconstancy and mutability, it is fitting that for a time his native weakness should be felt and seen. For what we are born with, and can claim as our own, is our nature, and we should not have a just and faithful mind about our nature if we knew not by experience what that nature is, and what, apart from the supernatural help of God, we ourselves are. Without this experimental knowledge of what we are by nature, where could we get that truthful sense and right perception of what we are apart from God, which furnishes us the ground for that fundamental virtue of humility, by which we are made subject to God, and are capable of receiving His gifts.

But if the supernatural state of grace were given to man from the moment of his existence, he would never have known what of himself he his, because the state of grace would be inseparable from the state of nature. The due order of things, therefore, required that in our present state of existence, nature should first appear alone, and that afterwards we should rise to better things. Our human nature is, therefore, so regulated, that it first appears in a condition altogether distinct from that which it becomes after God has sent upon us every good and perfect gift from heaven. But had these gifts been given from the first, and given with such power that we could not separate ourselves from God by sin, we should have been so absorbed in God through His gifts, as never to have known what by nature we are, nor from what poverty, weakness and mutability God had raised us up. We should never have known our native nothingness, or have been able to do justice to all that God had done for us. And so St. Augustine concludes his argument with these words: "Man could do no evil either with his will or against his will, if it were not that he is made from nothing, that is to say, were he not something less than God. But the divine nature alone is unchangeable, because God alone is not from nothing, but is eternal."†

* S. August. *Opus Imperfect., contra Julianum,* L. V. c. 31.

† *Ibid.* L. V. c. 33.

The third reason given by St. Augustine why man should begin in an imperfect state and liable to sin, is this: "As God is the perfect good, He envies no good whatever to His creatures. To all He gives the good they have, whether it be the less, the greater, or the greatest good. To Adam it was a great gift that he need not have died, although he was able to cause his own death; and to all men it is a great gift to receive a will from God that is able to avoid sin, even although it is able to commit sin. It is scarcely necessary to enlarge upon the beauty and splendour of such a gift. What an honour it is to man, that from the first he is put in a state in which, although tempted to sin, and able to sin, he may still abstain from sin, and so win for himself that better state of existence, in which he can sin no more. What a privilege it is to be so placed that, with God's help, he may become the author and architect of his own unchangeable happiness, and by exercising constancy in the midst of instability may purchase an estate of eternal immutability."*

What a dignity it is for man to put his industrious will and helping hand to second the work of God, and to work with God, not in making the primary elements of his weak and rudimentary nature, but in filling up that nature with good, and in forming himself to spiritual beauty. Had God given him perfection from the first, he would have had nothing of his own in that perfection. "It is a great thing," concludes St. Augustine, "to be able not to sin, but it is a far greater to be incapable of sin; and it is justly ordained that whilst that first state gives us the occasion for merit, the last state should give us the reward of well-doing. . . . . We must rise from the merit of the less good to the reward of the greater good."†

How firm must be the union of the soul with God, how strong the gift of justice, how pure the sanctity, how absorbing the charity, before the divine influence enters so deeply into our nature, and so completely conquers the instability of the soul, that she shall no longer be capable of sinning. But if this were our first condition, where would be the trial? Where the combat? Where the reward of patience? Where the victor's crown? It is such a permanent state of sanctity, that nothing greater in a created being could be thought of. But this full and secure felicity, to which

* S. August. *Opus Imperfect., contra Julianum.* L. V. c. 58.

† *Ibid.* c. 61. See also Thomassini, *Dogmata*, L. V. c. 13. *De Incarnatione.*

nothing can be added, is won by trial, and is the reward of the saints.

The Divine Wisdom teaches us in Ecclesiasticus, that "all things are made double, one against another, and God hath made nothing defective. He hath established the good things of every one. And who shall be filled with His glory?" Of this corresponding order of things, the most conspicuous example is that of the heavens doubled against the earth, and shedding their beneficent influences upon all that the earth contains. "The firmament on high is His beauty, the beauty of heaven with its glorious show. The sun when he appeareth showing forth at his rising, an admirable instrument, the work of the Most High." A nearer example of this double formation of things one against another, is the human body, each part of whose construction is doubled, one part against the other; and in which the noble and commanding members, the organs of mind and will, are placed superior, as against the less noble and obediential members, which are placed inferior.

When we enter our interior, we there find the superior soul doubled against the inferior soul. As Aristotle expresses it in his Politics: "There is implanted in the soul a double part, one that commands, and one that obeys." The superior is to the inferior soul what the heavens are to the earth, for on the superior side is the light of truth and justice, whilst on the inferior side are the movements of sense and the animal instincts that press upon the soul from below, whilst the will is the central power between the two, making its free choice between the heavenly light above and the earthly instinct beneath. In this doubling of the spiritual against the carnal man, and in setting His light over our darkness, God "hath established the good things of every one." And the question remains: "Who shall be filled with His glory?" To which the answer comes: He who looks up to the light above, and who takes hold on the heavenly grace, and who enters into the strength of God. For nature has expressed this truth by the pen of the pagan poet: "I see the better things, and approve them, but I follow the worse." And grace has expressed the same truth more clearly by the pen of St. Paul: "The good which I will, I do not." And again: "I am delighted with the law of God according to the inner man: but I see another law in my members, fighting against the law of my mind." Yet we may still adhere to the text of

Ecclesiasticus: "God hath made nothing defective. He hath established the good things of every one." He has put the light of truth in our mind, like the heavens above the earth, and this light is doubled over our weak and imperfect nature, that we may know what to approve and what to condemn, in what way to advance, and from what to recede, that we may not err from the path that leads to our perfection. We see the better things above doubled against the inferior things below, that we may reconcile the two, by choosing the superior for our master and the inferior for our servant. And as the weakness of our inferior nature is revealed to us by the light placed like a sun in our superior nature; we have the unfailing admonition to seek the strength we need from God, who never fails those who seek His grace with all their heart.

In his "Advancement of Learning" Lord Bacon has expressed the truth we are here treating in a quaint but forcible English which commends itself to close thinkers. He says: "There is found in every thing a double nature of good. . . . . This double nature of good, and the comparative thereof, is much more engraven in man, if he degenerate not. . . . . His approach or assumption to divine or angelic nature is the perfection of his form; the error or false imitation of which good, is that which is the tempest of human life, while man, upon the instinct of an advancement formal and essential, is carried to seek advancement local." Let those who boast themselves the followers of the scientific method of Bacon, in which he was long before anticipated by his great namesake the Franciscan friar of Oxford, observe how, in the spirit of a true philosopher, he establishes the formal, essential, and final end of man, and then measures his human progress by his advancement to that end. To put what he here says into modern language; there are two ideas or forms of good before the human mind, that of ourself as a natural good wanting completeness, and that of God as the form of divine or perfect good. But until our imperfect nature approaches or is taken up to the divine good, which is also the angelic good, we do not receive the perfection of our form. But when a man misdirects his instinct or appetite that points to this supreme or universal good, and diverts that instinct or appetite to what is local, that is, to what is of this earth, he commits the grave error of seeking the universal good in a false direction, and encounters the tempest of life, making no advancement meanwhile towards that

divine or angelic good which forms him to perfection. But the less a man has degenerated, the more he holds engraven in him the comparative value of these two kinds of good, knowing himself to be the lesser good whose form is incomplete, and that God is the perfect good, and that when he is advanced or taken up to God, his form obtains its perfection.

Should any one say that he wishes to abstain from evil, but that he cannot do so, he ought to remember that after a man has been long infected with disease, he cannot be cured by wishing it. An evil habit of long standing can only be got rid of by introducing a greater good into the soul, that by its vital force the evil may be expelled out of the system. If he will only seek that greater good, it will be given him. Even the fear of being caught and punished, as Titus of Bozra observes, when it gets possession of a man, will conquer his cupidity and stay him from evil doing. And this itself shows that sin is not the growth of nature, but a work of the affections. Let us all therefore praise the laws that punish the guilty without making any apology, and that confirm the common sense of mankind, which has no notion that men are driven by nature to crime, but is convinced that they give themselves to crime of their own free choice, and deserve their punishment.*

We now come to the masterly argument of St. Irenæus, that disciple of the Apostolic men, whose praise has flowed from the pens of many fathers of the Church. Listen, then, to the substance of his teaching.

You ask why God could not have made man perfect from the beginning? You ought to know, then, that whatever is created must be inferior to its Creator, and that what is not uncreated must fall short of perfection. Being of recent date, they are in an infantile condition. The mother could give strong meat to her child, but the child is unable to receive it. And God might have given perfection to man from his earliest existence, but being yet an infant, he could not receive it. It was for a like reason that our Lord came to us only in these latter times, summing up all things in Himself, and not coming as He might have come, but as we are able to behold Him. He might have come in His immortal glory, but how could we have borne the weight of that glory? For this reason, although He was the perfect bread of

* Titus Bostren, *Adversus Manichæos*, L. II.

the Father, He gave Himself to us as milk is given to infants, that being nourished at His breast, we might get accustomed to this milk diet in partaking of the word of God, and so become able to receive the bread of immortality, which is the Spirit of the Father. St. Paul had this in view when he said to the Corinthians: "I gave you milk to drink, not meat, because you were not yet able." As if he had said to them: You have learnt the Lord's coming as man, but because of your infirmity the Spirit of the Lord does not yet rest upon you. As the Apostle had the power of giving the Corinthians strong meat from the beginning, God had the power of giving man perfection from the beginning; but man was only recently created, he could not receive it, or, if he did receive it, he could not have dealt with it. There was nothing impossible on God's part, the defect was in the newly created man.

God hath exhibited His power, wisdom and goodness in one united plan; His power in creating and constituting the things that did not exist before; His wisdom in adapting and fitting them harmoniously into each other; and His unspeakable benignity in giving them growth and prolonged existence, to reflect the glory of the Uncreated One, the glory of God, who gives them good without jealousy. For God is the cause of all things, and all things are subject to God: and as the glory of the Uncreated One is incorruptible, to be subject to God is the preservation of incorruption. It is through this order, harmony, and divine guidance of things, that man is man, and is constituted to the image and likeness of God. The Father planned all things well, and gave the command; the Son executed the command and framed the work; the Holy Spirit nourishes and gives increase to that which is made. But man is advanced to what is perfect by little and little, and is thus advanced by being brought nearer to the Uncreated One. It was necessary that he be first created; that after being created, he receive growth; that after receiving growth, he be strengthened; that after he is strengthened, he be multiplied; that after he is multiplied, he be recovered from his disorder; that after he is recovered from his disorder, he be glorified; and that in being glorified, he see the Lord God. For God remains yet to be seen, and the vision of God is the cause of incorruption, and "incorruption bringeth near to God."

It is unreasonable, therefore, to ascribe our infirmity to God,

instead of waiting for our growth. He who does this, neither knows God nor himself; he is as unsatiable as he is ungrateful, and it is through excess of passion that he is unwilling to be what God has made him. Flying beyond the law of his nature, he would wish to be like God his Creator even before he has become a man. The dumb beasts make no complaint that they are not men, they are thankful for their condition as it is; but men are more unreasonable, they complain of God that He makes them men first that they may be made gods hereafter, instead of being made gods all at once. Yet how can they charge their Creator with grudging and envy, when He tells them even now: "I have said: Ye are gods, and all sons of the Most High." And then He says to us, who are still incapable of bearing the power of His Divinity: "But nevertheless ye shall die as men." In this manner does the Almighty set forth his own benignity and our infirmity, whilst He intimates at the same time that we are left in our own power. For in His benignity He has already given good to us, and given it to us in such a way, that we may be like Him in the very fact of being in our own power. But in His foresight He knows our weakness, and what befalls us through our weakness, and has therefore reserved to His own love and power, the gift to enable us to overcome our frailty.

It was needful then for us that nature should make its appearance first, and that afterwards what is corruptible should be absorbed in incorruption, and what is mortal in immortality; and it is for the sake of this exceeding good that man is made in the image of God, that he may be transferred to His likeness, and may receive the knowledge of good and evil. Our good in this world is to believe God, to obey Him, and to keep His commandments; this is the cause of our life. Our evil is to disobey God; this is the cause of our death. God therefore gave us a large mental light, that with its help we may know the good of obedience and the evil of disobedience, and that having experienced both of them, we may come to the making of a wise choice, and may not through our indolence be neglectors of His commands. For we have much firmer and more certain knowledge of what has passed through our experience than of what we only know by conjecture and surmise; and were we left in ignorance of evil, how could we obtain the discipline of good? The experience of evil as well as of good begets a firmer deter-

mination to keep the good of life by obeying God, and to shun the evil of death that comes of disobedience. But if we are thoughtless enough to neglect the two kinds of knowledge that come of this double experience, we unconsciously kill the man within us.

How can you be a god before you are completed as a man? Or how can you expect to be perfect having come so recently into existence? How can you be immortal, after failing in your mortal nature to obey your Creator? It is not you who make God, but God who makes you; and until you have been faithful to your state of man, God will not give you His glory. As you are of God's making, and as your creation is still going on, you must wait patiently for the hand of your Maker, who will supply what is wanting in due course of time. Give your heart to Him in a soft and pliable condition, like the clay in the potter's hands; for if you become hard, you will not be able to receive the impression of His plastic fingers. Keep that form into which the Divine Artist moulds you, for by retaining the form that God may please to give you, you rise into perfection. Depend upon it that, as the Divine Workman moulds you into a better design, he will conceal your clay with silver and gold, and will adorn you with such perfection that the King will desire your beauty. But if you are stiff and unyielding, you repel the hand of the Divine Artist, you prove yourself ungrateful to His noble design, and will lose the divine art that would form you, and the divine workmanship that would perfect you, and lose your own life as well. For whilst it depends on the divine goodness to make us perfect, it depends on our own submissiveness whether we will be made perfect; so that only on the condition of our delivering ourselves with submissive confidence into His hands, shall we receive His divine workmanship in return, and so become His perfect work.

As God is able to raise up children to Abraham from the very stones, there is no want of power or skill on His part; but if instead of trusting yourself to Him, you will fly from His hands, you are yourself the cause of your imperfect condition; it is you who will neither let your God perfect you, nor work with Him that you may be perfected. Although a man may blind himself, he cannot destroy the light, which remains ever as before. He may avoid the light by going into the dark, because no one is compelled to accept His illumination whether he will or not. God compels no one to accept His skill to make him

perfect against his own will. There is no question but that men are in their own power; but when they use their freedom to withdraw from their Father's light, they transgress the law of liberty, and lose the better things through their own fault.

As God foresees and provides all things, He has prepared suitable dwellings as well for those who love His light as for those who fly from His light. For those who with love thirst for His light, He has prepared in His benignity an incorruptible light; but for those who despise His light, who fly from its approach, and choose to blind themselves in darkness, He has prepared such mansions of darkness as befit the enemies of light, and such a subjection to punishment as befits them who will not be subject to Him. To be subject to God is everlasting rest; but they that fly from light and peace, and refuse God's rest, will find a dwelling prepared for their restless condition, which is devoid of that light and peace from which they so willingly fly. It is they who, by abandoning God, defraud themselves of the good that is only to be found in God; and it is they who, by abandoning peace and rest, bring themselves into fellowship with pain. By their abandonment of light, they justly dwell in darkness. By choosing to withhold themselves from God's eternal light, which has in it the promise of eternal good, they are themselves the unhappy cause of receiving their dwelling in that everlasting darkness which is empty of all good.

This, then, is the great plan of God's divine economy, that man should pass through all things, and be tried in all, and have the experience of moral conduct before he comes to the resurrection from the dead. And after his experience has taught him who has delivered him, and from what he has been delivered, he will then be everlastingly grateful to God, and will greatly love Him; for as the Scripture says: "To whom much is forgiven, he greatly loveth."

He also learns by experience to know himself, and to understand how weak and mortal he is. He learns likewise by experience to know God, to know His goodness, mightiness, and immortality, since He gives immortality to that which is by nature mortal, and eternity to that which is by its natural constitution, temporal. He also learns to know by experience the attributes of God, as in His exercise of them He reveals His greatness: for God is the glory of man, but man is the recipient

of those providential operations that make known to him the wisdom, power, and mercy of God. As the physician makes his qualifications known by healing his patients, God makes His attributes known by healing man and giving him perfection. St. Paul has touched upon this profound reason of the divine economy where he says: "God hath included all in unbelief, that He may have mercy on all."

Man has only to abide in the love of God with subjection and gratitude, and he will receive from God the power to make progress, and to reach His glorious end, by becoming like to Him who died for him. It was for this very purpose that God the Word was made like to sinful flesh, that He might condemn sin in the flesh, and cast it out, and call upon men to imitate His example. He laid His Father's law upon them, and called on them to imitate God by observing that law, that in becoming like to Him, they might deserve to see Him. He was made man, and dwelt in man, that whilst obeying His Father's will, he might accustom man to receive God, and accustom God to dwell in man.*

It is a useful danger, observes Titus of Bozra, even if it were not a necessary danger, that we should not be created absolutely good, but exposed at first to evil, for otherwise we should be wholly defeated of good. The man is good who is just and temperate, but he is just by abstaining from injustice, and temperate by abstaining from intemperance. What virtues could he carry to heaven if he had nothing to contend for, and nothing to contend against?

If man had been put to no trial between good and evil, the grand work of God's fatherly providence would never have brought His paternal attributes to all hearts; nor would His wonderful condescension have been known to His human children. That infinite patience with His creatures, and that long forbearance with the ungrateful, would not have glorified our Heavenly Father, have filled the angels and the just with wonder, and the penitent with consolation and astonishment. The untiring bounty and care of our Heavenly Father's providence, as it is exercised over His enemies as well as His friends, that "maketh His sun to rise upon the good and the bad, and raineth upon the just and the unjust," would not have filled heaven and earth with amaze-

* S. Irenæus, *Adversus Hæreses*, L. IV. c. xxxviii., ix.; L. III. c. xx.

ment at His goodness. Had we not been exposed to evil as well as good, the mercy of God that pursues the sinner with remorse, that turns sin into bitterness, that follows the sinner with yearning compassion, that is ever ready with life and healing to restore him to pardon and friendship, would not have revealed to His creatures the unspeakable tenderness of God. The divine power would not have come forth in all its magnificence, with love for its motive and wisdom for its guide, to draw good with incredible abundance out of evil. Nor would the divine generosity have been displayed to His intelligent creatures in the truly God-like exercise of lifting up the lowly and the fallen, "raising up the needy from the dust, and the poor from the dunghill, to make them sit with princes, even with the princes of His people." What, in short, should we have ever known of the fatherly attributes of our God, that reveal the profound things of His heart, that inexhaustible goodness, that unconquerable patience, that infinite mercy, and unspeakable tenderness of love, had we never known weakness or evil?

Were it possible, nothwithstanding our free will, and our origin from nothingness, and had it been so ordained, that we should be created incapable of sinning; our human nature would never have been raised from a depth so low to a height so divine, by its personal union with God in the incarnation of His Eternal Word for our redemption. Through that unspeakable union of God with man, we have obtained a Divine Head to the whole human race, for our greater union with God through the right of the Divine Humanity, and such an abundance of every kind of grace suited to our human condition, as we could never have hoped for, except at the fearful cost of the sacrifice of Christ the Son of God. Again, if man had not been placed between good and evil, he would have had no history, as he could have made no progress. And what does this signify? That there would be no eternal remembrance for the heavens of that wonderful and most ample course of God's dealings with men through the ages, or of man's continual combat with evil, and of his deliverance from evil to good. The Prophets, the Law, the Gospel would not have been. The Apostles, the Martyrs, the Fathers, the Saints, all perfected through suffering, would not have been under divine direction, the successive illuminators of the world, and the wonder-workers of God's wisdom and power. The solemn rite of sacrifice would not

have worshipped God in the former ages, foreshadowing the Cross, and keeping up men's hopes and trust in a Divine Deliverer. Nor should we have seen God in our nature, in human habit like our own, walking before us in example, bearing our sins and sorrows, enlightening us with heavenly truth in a human way, and giving us assurance that by following Him we come to God, and even to the mountain of His vision. We should never have had that sublime and awful demonstration of God's justice, or that crowning proof of His inexhaustible love, in the sacrifice of His Son upon the Cross, for the remission of our sins, which shall be sung as the hymn of the glorified throughout eternity. Nor should we have known the exceeding humility and charity of the Son of God, whose spirit flows in grace to heal the wounds of fallen humanity.

Before the question is asked, why God did not make man perfect and sinless from the first; it must be remembered that we are speaking of God's earthly dispensation; and that for reasons profound beyond our search, as well as for reasons made known to us, it was the eternal plan to have a great earthly dispensation, with a wonderful exercise of the divine power, wisdom, mercy, and goodness; and that the greater the difficulties arising from the weak elements of this creation, all the more grand and glorious is the divine triumph in raising up such a vast amount of everlasting good from elements so weak and from wills so unstable.

It should also be remembered, that, if we had never known our weakness, we should never have known what strength we receive from God to accomplish our union with Him. Had we never been liable to sin, we should never have been taken from the stock of Adam to be engrafted on the divine humanity of Christ. Had we been without free will, we should have been incapable of love, and incapable of devotedness. Just think of a blessedness in which you could not love, or be grateful, or be generous. Just think of a blessedness in which you could not freely give yourselves as children to the father of your blessedness. Had we been created perfect without our will and co-operation, it would have been rather a passive than an active perfection, more like that of a material than of a free and spiritual nature. Had we been created in heaven rather than on earth, we must have been creatures of another kind. And had we been there made perfect

at once, we could never have known our nature, and what it is in itself, as apart from the divine gifts by which it is perfected. The angels, therefore, were placed on trial and left capable of sin, before they were perfected.

Had we not been tried and found wanting, until the inmost core of our nature was searched through with divine light and grace, the deepest grounds for that profound and sweet humility, which is the soul's inmost expression of truthful sincerity, justice, and right dependence, would not be there to make her virtue most pleasing to God. Those highest motives of gratitude for the deliverance from evil would be wanting to the soul; and, finally, the overpowering argument to superabounding love, arising from the contrast between all that God has pardoned in the past, and all the beatitude He gives in the everlasting present, would not be there to perfect the ardour of grateful love. For "to whom less is forgiven, he loveth less."

LECTURE XI.

THE FALL OF MAN IN CONNECTION WITH THE FALL OF THE ANGELS AND THE REDEMPTION OF CHRIST.

"As in Adam all die, so also in Christ all shall be made alive."—1 CORINTHIANS, xv. 22.

IF there be an absurd way of denying accepted truth, it must be that of withholding the mind from the evidence. Yet this is the ordinary course followed by what are called free-thinkers in religion. Like all the most evident things, religion is her own witness, and carries her own credentials; proves how well she is fitted to the deepest requirements of human nature, and explains that nature as nothing else can do. But the free-thinker first withdraws his mind and heart from religion, and then undertakes to settle the cause of religion in her absence. So far, however, is this mode of proceeding from simplifying the condition of human life, or from removing its perplexities, that it only augments them a thousandfold, whilst it leaves nothing whatever explained. For when a man rejects the revelation of God, and refuses to believe his descent and inheritance from the fallen Adam, he finds nothing so hard to explain as the condition of humanity, and his own position, in this mysterious world.

The common refuge of theory-makers is to assume that man is descended from primitive ancestors that were rude, brutal, and but little removed from animal life, and that he has developed with time into an intellectual and moral perfection as the result of progressive civilization. But however plausible this theory may look to the mere rational man at first sight, and when taken apart from the history of his race, it will not bear a close inspection. An effect cannot be greater than its cause. The brutal

man could not produce the intellectual and moral man from a mere change of external circumstances; he must have within him the light of intellectual and moral principles. If these principles and powers are not already within him, they must have been subsequently implanted by some great intellectual and moral cause, which would be equivalent to a new creation.

The theory of human advancement from an inhuman condition is contradicted by the whole tradition of the human race, which has brought everywhere the remembrance of a primæval state of innocence and happiness from which man has fallen. And to this external tradition must be added the internal consciousness of man, bearing witness to the historic fact, and making him sensible to the very centre of his nature that he is not what he was created, but has undergone some sad and calamitous deterioration. When faith, therefore, comes to teach us the history of our fall, we at once find the solution of the riddle of human life, and the manifest reply to many anxious questionings of the soul.

The proofs of the fall are everywhere to the mind that looks for them. We see them in the condition of man, and in the condition of the world; we hear them in the voice of humanity, in the testimonies of history and the revelations of God. Those, however, who measure the state and progress of man by inapplicable tests are sure to go wrong. The true test of human progress is not to be found in accumulated property, nor in the knowledge of sublunary things, nor in social polish, but in the advancement of man towards his Supreme Good, towards which a simple and unpretentious mode of life, resting mainly on the providence of God, is the most favourable. The savage represents not the primitive life of man, but the corruption of that life. If, on the other hand, we examine the early civilizations as represented in the founding of cities, we find them taking their rise from the atrocious conquests of ambitious chiefs, who hunt their fellow-men, seize upon their possessions, and reduce them to a life of miserable slavery. Even the polished Greeks and imperial Romans based their civilization on no better foundation. Then the city itself and its founders became the object of men's worship in place of God. Every great and complicated civilization, when it is not strongly imbued and tempered with the principles of Christian faith, gives rise to a vast amount of mental and moral

corruption, and by the unequal distribution of the goods of this life, occasions a mass of misery beyond the power of the State to remedy. It is difficult, therefore, and even impossible, to think that mere human civilization can be the chief cause of human perfection and happiness.

If we look to the dawn of history, we find a race of men leading a simple pastoral life in their families, having few material wants, conversing with God and worshipping Him in simplicity of heart. The scope of their mind is turned more to heavenly than to earthly things. These are the descendants of Seth and Enos, and they are called "the sons of God." We see another race who build cities, of course by the usual expedients of conquest and slavery. They forge metals into weapons of war, and invent musical instruments, probably for idolatrous worship as well as war. These are the descendants of Cain, and they are called the children of men. From this first civilization came the first great corruption of human life. But after the sons of God formed alliances with the daughters of men, after the godly race had united with the ungodly race and shared in their corrupt civilization, the whole human family corrupted its way, and then came the deluge of water to sweep out the deluge of iniquity.

However great, then, may be the value of a true civilization, and however it may be in the order of Divine Providence, it is undeniable that the world has seen a vast amount of false civilization, resulting in the most calamitous corruption of human nature. To measure the well-being of man by the standard of civilization, as it consists in crowded populations, in accumulation of wealth, in artificial modes and fashions of life, in the unceasing toil of the multitude, in the ease and leisure of the few, and in the ambition of all to rise above their neighbours in show and social status, is to utterly mistake the nature of man, and the elements that constitute his happiness. It is not in the crowded ways of human life that a man strengthens, feeds, and elevates his mind, and gives vigour and tone to his moral character, but in the retirement of domestic life, or in the retreats of solitude. And he spoke wisely and well, who said: "I never retire from among men without finding myself less a man." The one question decisive of human happiness is whether a man most seeks God or himself; for there is but one fundamental law of human progress and perfection, and that is the progress of the man towards his Supreme Good and

final end; and to this principle all the cares and concerns of this life are subordinate.

From this principle it necessarily follows, that a people who live by faith and make their religion the first object of their life, will never exhibit to the eyes of worldly men as great an appearance of worldly prosperity as they who make this world their first object and God but a secondary consideration. They have much less of this world's ambition; they are not eager for display whether of their bodily or mental good; they are not always on the stretch after this world's goods; they make not their life an unbroken toil after money or distinction, as if this were the one virtue of human nature. They are more blessed, nevertheless, in the material goods that they know they have received from God, because they have fewer wants, and use their temporal goods with temperance and moderation, and are free in giving for the love of God, which is a great joy of life. In the eye of wisdom the true test of social economy, and the just standard of civilization does not consist in the amount of wealth and the spread of ideas possessed by society at large, however distributed; but in the way in which such circumstances affect the souls of men in their individual capacity, as they are persons created for God, and not merely as they are members of a human commonwealth, where one contributes mind and a sense of superiority, and a hundred contribute unwearied toil and the sense of inferiority.

To return from this digression, a great proof of the fall of man shines forth from the first dawn of history, in the expectation entertained by man of a Divine Deliverer, and in the vicarious sacrifices in which the belief and hope of that Deliverer is expressed. It is difficult to imagine how this mode of worshipping God could have arisen and spread through the world without an adequate cause. It is impossible to suppose that this universal practice of propitiatory sacrifices, spread everywhere with the human race, from their earliest remembrances until they reach the sacrifice of Redemption, could have originated with mankind, unless there had been an original commandment from God, to which the sense of his fallen condition, and of the want of a divine deliverance, led man to correspond. We find a line of prophetic men from the earliest period of human life, who keep up the teaching of the one true God and of the promised Deliverer, until that line centres in a prophetic family, and that family grows into a prophetic

nation. The history of that nation becomes famous in the world, and its records are filled with the actions of God as the governor and guide of that people. They are constantly suffering for their infidelity to the voice of God, yet they record their own guiltiness, and never cease from offering sacrifices in hope of their Divine Deliverer, who shall free the whole world from evil. The more they sin, the more they disobey, the more they reveal the weakness of human nature, the more loud and strenuous becomes the voice of their prophets, portraying the whole character of that Divine Deliverer, even to the minutest particulars, with all the harrowing circumstances of his sufferings and death. The very prophets themselves are the vivid figures in their own persons of his life and sufferings. And whilst this prophetic nation exhibits a light to the whole world, which the world is slow to perceive; even amid the grossest corruptions of paganism, three fundamental truths, however much abused, are still discernable among the nations at large: that man has fallen from a primitive state of happiness; that the Divinity is to be propitiated by vicarious sacrifices; and that man is in want of a Divine Deliverer. Hence, though they lost sight of the true God, they still feigned to themselves some God or other, born of a woman, whom they invoked as the helper and deliverer of man. And upon these three fundamental ideas, which seemed to be inherent in man, when purged of all their errors and superstitions, Christianity was grafted. St. Paul appealed to what Tertullian calls this natural Christianity of the human soul, when he preached the unknown God to the Athenians.

There is nothing isolated in the universe. Between heaven and earth there is a perpetual correspondence. All things that are like are drawn towards each other by the attraction of their likeness. There are many relations established between the things above and the things beneath, which are the most clearly seen by the purest minds. The two great divisions of created intelligences, notwithstanding the great difference of their constitution, have many things in common. They have one Creator, Lord and Father; they have one and the same divine Illuminator of their intelligence; they have one and the same principle of their perfection in the grace of the Holy Spirit. They have the likeness of God in common; and the spiritual virtues in common; and their chief interests in common. The supreme good of angels and of

men is one and the same ; and as they were created to meet in one common good, and in one eternal society with God, they have a mutual interest in each other, and in proportion to their goodness are attracted towards each other.

As the first and brightest of intelligent creations, the angels are called in the Book of Job, the "morning stars," and "the sons of God." When the foundations of the earth were laid for the habitation of mankind, we are divinely told, that "the morning stars sang together, and the sons of God made a joyful melody." To the angelic hosts the creation of man was a great and joyful event ; for it brought them brethren in a new sphere of intelligent life, and opened to them a ministry of charity to those brethren in the day of their trial, and a most honourable service. For, as St. Paul tells us, "they are all ministering spirits, sent to minister to them who shall receive the inheritance of salvation." This is ever the Divine way, that God should show His royal generosity, and absence of all jealousy, by ennobling His creatures, in giving them high offices and ministries so that those who are superior may enlighten, protect and serve those of their brethren who are still inferior in place and weak in good. Having passed their own probation, and reached their final good, they receive this additional honour, happiness and likeness to God, that they are made the ministers of God to men, to be a charitable help to those who are striving to obtain their final end. If you take the Concordance in hand, and turn to the word Angel, you will find that from the beginning to the end of the Scriptures, the ministry of angels to men is recorded in more than three hundred places. If you scan the mythologies of the Gentiles with an intelligent view to their first origin, it is difficult to resist the conclusion, that they originated in the corruption of the earlier belief in the ministry of angels. The very strifes between the inferior Gods, and the revolutions in the heavens, which those mythologies celebrate, are but the clouded and perverted reminiscence of the conflict of the good and evil angels, and the fall of the latter from their principalities.

God is not far from each one of us, nor the ministering angels, who are with God. St. Paul, therefore, teaches the Hebrews: "You are come to Mount Sion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to the company of many thousands of angels, and to the church of the first-born, who are written in

heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of the just made perfect."

The angels were created in a place of probation to which the Scriptures give the name of Heaven, although it was not the Heaven of beatitude, where they lived by faith and contemplation, until having stood their trial, they passed to the eternal vision of God. Pure spirits, they received excelling gifts, above their nature, and by their fidelity they perfected their love. The Eternal Word was their illuminator, and therefore their mediator, and the Holy Spirit was by His gifts of grace their sanctifier and their perfector. But, like ourselves, they were made from nothing, and were consequently by nature weak and changeable. Their nature was weak, though their gifts were strong; let them once lose their humility, and the more noble their gifts, the greater the peril of their appropriating as their own what they have divinely received from God, and so falling from God through the vice of pride, and the descent from justice.

As it is the office of the higher intelligences among men to enlighten, guide, and influence those who are endowed with less intelligence; so is it the office of the higher orders of angelic intelligences to illuminate the lower orders with their superior light and influence. Now Lucifer was one of the noblest and most highly endowed among the angelic hosts, who like some great heresiarch, drew a third of the angels into his apostasy from God. Revolting in their pride as pure spirits from the Divine Author of their good; acting from no corporal weakness, and under no influence from an external tempter, these angels greatly sinned against so great a light, and with so great a pride, that their fall was irreparable. There is no redemption for them, and St. Paul assures us, that Jesus "nowhere takes hold of the angels, but of the seed of Abraham He taketh hold."

The great mystery of Redemption from sin, and of a new Headship to the creation, was preordained in favour of the human race, and this most amazing of all mysteries was partly revealed to the angels during their probation, as a test of their faith and humility; and by their faith in this mystery, or their revolt from its revelation, the angels stood in the truth, or fell. But this requires a larger explanation.

How magnificent were the endowments of those angels before their fall, and how terrible the pride through which they fell, may

be gathered from the prophet Ezechiel, where he describes the fall of their leader as a type of the fall of the king of Tyre. "Thou wast the seal of resemblance, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou wast the pleasure of the paradise of God: every precious stone was thy covering. . . . .Thou wast a cherub stretching out thy wings, and covering, and I set thee in the holy mountain of God. Thou hast walked in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day of thy creation, until iniquity was found in thee. . . . . And I cast thee out from the mountain of God, and destroyed thee, O covering cherub, out of the midst of the stones of fire. And thy heart was lifted up in thy beauty: and thou hast lost thy wisdom in thy beauty, I have cast thee to the ground." The height of ambition to which Lucifer aspired in his pride is more fully described by the prophet Isaias, where he is put forward as the type of the King of Babylon. "How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, who didst rise in the morning! How art thou fallen to the earth, that didst wound the nations! And thou saidst in thy heart, I will ascend into Heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God, I will sit in the mountain of the Covenant, in the sides of the North, I will ascend above the heights of the clouds, I will be like to the Most High. But yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, into the depth of the pit."

This description points to an ambition on the part of Lucifer to take the headship of creation, and of the covenant, in place of the Son of God. It is an intimation that the pride of the great cherub rose to its intolerable pitch of insolence through jealousy of the predestined incarnation of the Son of God, and through the defeat of an ambition to take the headship of the creation. St. Paul is frequent in urging the truth, that although the angels were appointed to minister to men in what concerns their salvation, yet they are not the saviours of men. "To which," he asks, "of the angels hath God said, at any time: Thou art my son, to-day have I begotten thee. And again, when He bringeth the first-begotten into the world, He saith: And let all the angels of God adore Him." Here is a plain indication that when the Incarnation was revealed to the angels, they were commanded to adore the Son of God in the form of man. Again, the Apostle asks: "To which of the angels said He at any time: Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thy enemies my footstool?" And he

shows that God would not subject the world to the angels, and so give them the headship; but that in Jesus Christ he lifted up man to a condition above the angels, through His death putting all things under His feet, "Destroying the empire of death, that is to say, the devil." For "He nowhere layeth hold of the angels, but of the seed of Abraham He layeth hold."

If we unite this doctrine of St. Paul with the description of the fall of Lucifer by Isaias, the conclusion rises to the strongest probability that there was some mysterious ambition and jealousy among the proud angels respecting the Incarnation, and some mysterious rejection of them in connection with that mystery. This is fully brought out by St. John in the Apocalypse, where the vision depicts the fall of Satan and his angels as the type of Antichrist and his followers. In that most wonderful book the Incarnate Word of God is the central figure. He is the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end of all things. We are made to see the whole course of the angelic history, as well as of our human history, ending in good or evil, according as angels or men conduct themselves towards the mystery of human redemption. There the influence of the angels, both good and evil, upon the destinies of mankind are clearly shown. There we behold that mystery of the Divine Incarnation as the beginning, the middle, and the end of all things. There we see the great patience of God in the exercise of His providence, ruling all things in view of the final exaltation of the just with His Incarnate Son, and of the final overthrow of His adversaries with their chief instigator, Satan. The Apocalypse is the prophecy of prophecies, unlocking the final sense of all preceding prophets, and drawing from the conflict of the good and evil angels in Heaven on account of the first revelation of the predestined Incarnation, the type of the conflict on earth between faith and infidelity, between the Church and the unbelieving world, as they respect that mystery accomplished. Such is the character of all prophecy. One person is put as the type of another, one group of events becomes the type of another, where the principle of the conflict continues the same. In the Apocalypse the Mother of Christ is put forth as the type of the Church, which is the mother of the faithful; and as Mary is the spouse of the Holy Ghost, so the Church is the spouse of Christ. And Satan is put forth with profound significance as the type of Antichrist. The conflict of the

good and evil angels, resulting from the vision of the Son of God as the Son of the glorified woman, is more than a type of the conflict between the societies of faith and infidelity on earth, forasmuch as the good and evil angels are seen to take their sides and actually join in the conflict between good and evil, even to the consummation of all things.

"And the temple of God was seen in Heaven," writes St. John, "and the ark of the testament was seen in the temple." Christ is the testament; Mary is the ark of the testament. As St. John of Damascus says: "She is the animated ark of the living God." "And a great sign appeared in Heaven, a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon beneath her feet, and on her head a crown of twelve stars: and being with child, she cried out travailing in birth, and was in pain to be delivered. And there was seen another sign in Heaven: and behold a great dragon having seven heads and ten horns; and on his head seven diadems. And his tail drew the third part of the stars of Heaven, and cast them to the earth: and the dragon stood before the woman who was ready to be delivered: that, when she should be delivered, he might devour her son. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her son was taken up to God, and to His throne."

This great dragon is afterwards called "that old serpent, who is called the devil, who seduceth the whole world." The first of the two great signs in Heaven is the glorified Mother of God Incarnate in our humanity, for her Son is taken up to God, and to His throne, and none but God can sit upon the Throne of God. But, as a type of the Church, a part of this description refers to the sufferings through which the children of the Church are brought to God. The other sign, the great dragon lying in wait to destroy the child after his birth, is Satan, the type of antichrist, as he is his instigator. This type was first fulfilled in Herod, who sought the death of the child, from whom he was saved by the flight of the woman through the desert into Egypt. Both St. Peter and St. Paul speak of the Divine Incarnation as predestined before all ages and all creation. St. Paul applies to it the words of the Psalm: "Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldest not; but thou hast fitted a body to me. Behold I come; in the head of the book it is written of me, that I should do Thy will, O God." St. Peter speaks of "the precious blood of Christ

as of a lamb without spot, foreknown, indeed, before the constitution of the world, but manifested in the last times." St. Paul says again: "We have redemption through His blood, who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature;" whilst in the Apocalypse Christ is called "the beginning of the creation of God."

What, then, is more probable than that when the angels were tried in faith, and their humility tested, they received the revelation of the future incarnation of the Word of God, through whom they themselves were both created and illuminated, and who, "being made so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a more excellent name than they," yet was "made a little lower than the angels," and, "for the sufferings of death, crowned with glory and honour," whom the Father "hath set over all His works, and hath subjected all things under His feet."

St. Paul intimates this trial of the angelic faith where he says: "When He bringeth the first-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God adore Him." This clearly points to a command that the angels of God should worship the Incarnate Son upon their very first introduction to the mystery. That the name and mystery of Christ is intimately connected with the fall of Satan our Lord Himself seems to intimate. When the seventy-two disciples returned to Him with joy, saying, "Lord, the devils also are subject to us in Thy name; He said to them: I saw Satan, like lightning, falling from Heaven."

What, then, was the trial of the angels? In what difficult truth did the majority of their numbers stand steadfast, whilst a third part of them stood not in the truth? They were tried by faith as we are tried. Were they tried by the self-same mystery of faith by which the world is tried? The angels knew the eternal Word of God as their Creator and Illuminator, and the vision of St. John presents them as tried by the sign or vision of the birth of a Divine child from woman, who is taken up to the throne of God; after which there immediately springs a great conflict between the good and evil angels; one side cleaving to God, and the other rising in rebellion against God. This view of the subject is confirmed in other parts of the Scriptures. St. Peter tells us that the angels longed to look down into the deep mystery of Redemption. And he tells us further, that the angels, powers

and virtues are made subject to Christ. But this longing to penetrate the mystery indicates a knowledge begun in faith, though not consummated in vision. And as the sublime and awful mystery was revealed to men so long before its accomplishment, why should it not have been revealed yet earlier to the angels?

The knowledge of the Divine Incarnation concerned them intimately, and in more ways than as a trial of their faith and submission. Christ was to sit in His humanity at the right hand of the Father, to hold the primacy over the angels as well as over men, and they were to be subject under His feet. When he enters into the world, all the angels of God are to adore Him. "Making purgation of sins," says the apostle, "He sitteth on the right hand of the Majesty on high, being made so much better than the angels, as He hath inherited a greater name than they." Again: "At the name of Jesus every knee shall bow, of those that are in Heaven, on earth, and under the earth;" and once more, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ "raising Him up from the dead, setting Him on his right hand in the heavenly places, above all principality, and power, and virtue, and dominion, and every name that is named not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And He hath subjected all things under His feet."

We already see what a great interest the angels have in the mystery of the Incarnation. But this is not all. St. Paul teaches that there was a renewal and re-establishment of all things in Heaven as well as on earth, through the blood of Christ; and whilst he tells this to the Ephesians, he tells the Colossians that it is the will of the Father, "through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, making peace through the blood of His Cross, both as to the things on earth and the things in Heaven." And let this be remarked, that the fall of Satan and his angels from Heaven is represented in the Apocalypse as immediately following the opposition of Satan to the Child born of the woman; to the Child that sits on the throne of God; and that straight away after their fall St. John heard the exclamations of the angels who stood faithful and firm in the truth: "Now is come salvation and strength, and the kingdom of God, and the power of His Christ." From this it would seem obvious that the angels were saved through their faith put on its trial, through the revelation of the

Divine Incarnation, and through their humility in adoring God, clothed in a form less noble than their own.

All this again tends to show what great interest the angels had in the divine mystery of the Incarnation, and in the whole condition of humanity. How the good angels could be saved through Christ, though they had never fallen, is explained in the ancient Book on the Divine names, where the author says: "Would any one praise that salvation whereby all things are protected from things that are worse, we allow the praise of this first of all salvations, that keeps things so steadfast and unchangeable as not to sink down into evil. . . . . It is by no means beyond the scope of sacred theology to praise this kind of salvation, that delivers any nature from the loss of that good which accords with its kind. The theologians, therefore, call this also by the name of redemption, because it suffers not the creature to fall back towards nothingness."* But this is the salvation of the angels, who by the power of divine grace stood in the truth revealed to them, and kept their innocence.

St. Ignatius the Martyr, therefore says to the Smyrneans, that, "if the glorious angels and princes, whether visible or invisible, believe not in the blood of Christ, it is to their condemnation." And St. Jerome says in his comment on the Ephesians, that "the Son of God descended into the lowest regions of the earth, and went up above all the heavens, not only that He might fulfill the law and the prophets, but that He might also execute certain hidden dispensations which are only known to Himself and to the Father. We know not after what manner the blood of Christ profited the angels; but we know nevertheless that it did profit them." St. Bernard asks in his exposition of the Canticles, how Christ could be the redemption of the angels? And he gives the answer in these terms: "He who raised up man from his fall, gave to the angel who stood that he might not fall. Whilst He thus rescued man from captivity, He protected the angel from captivity. In that way He was equally a redemption to both, delivering the one and preserving the other. It is thus made plain how Christ the Lord was redemption to the holy angels, as He was their justice, wisdom, and sanctification."

We may now return with greater light to the vision of St. John. The part already quoted most certainly refers to the Divine Incar-

* *De Divinis Nominibus*, c. 8. n. 9.

nation, and to Satan as the adversary of that wonderful mystery ; and these scenes in heaven are typical of the perpetual combat between Christ in His Church and Satan in the world. St. Methodius says that this was a belief in the Church, and St. Augustine tells his people that they knew it to be so. This vision of the Incarnation of the Son of God is also a direct blow at the Corinthians and the Ebionites, the sects denying the Incarnation against whom St. John wrote his Gospel. The rod of iron with which the divine child was to rule the nations is the attribute of Christ both in the second Psalm and in an earlier part of the Apocalypse.

No sooner is Satan defeated of his aim, and the Child taken up to God and His throne, than "there was a great battle in heaven. Michael and his angels fought with the dragon, and the dragon fought and his angels, and that great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, who is called the devil and Satan, who seduceth the whole world : and he was cast unto the earth, and his angels were thrown down with him." This is a literal description of the fall of the angels, following immediately upon the revelation of the woman giving birth to the Child Who ascends to the throne of God. The conflict between spiritual intelligences is of course a conflict with spiritual weapons : the angels that stood firm contended with faith, with humility, and with submission to the great revelation of the Incarnate Word ; whilst the unfaithful angels fought against God and His angels with their pride and rebellion ; and not standing in the truth, they fell and were cast out. The Archangel who led the faithful angels took up the word Michael for his cry, that is to say : Who is like to God ? and it became his designation. The leader of the rebellious hosts received the name of Satan, which means the adversary, and this became his designation.*

Here must you especially note how Isaias, Ezechiel, and St. John accord in stating that Satan was cast upon the earth. Our Lord also calls Satan "the prince of this world"; and St. Paul describes the wicked angels as "the rulers of the world of this darkness, the spirits of wickedness in high places." On this part of the vision St. John is explicit, as we shall see directly ; and there was evidently some great purpose contemplated in permitting the entrance of the evil spirits into this world before their final punishment.

No sooner are they cast out of heaven than St. John hears the

* See Cornelius a Lapide on the whole text. Also the Author's *Immaculate Conception of the Mother of God*, c. 8.

rejoicings of the good angels over their victory, and a loud voice saying: "Now is come salvation, and strength, and the Kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ: because the accuser of our brethren is cast forth. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of the testimony, and they loved not their lives unto death." Undoubtedly there is a blending of the heavenly and earthly victories in these lines; yet the angels attribute their salvation and strength, the passing of their trial and the coming of their Kingdom, to the power of Christ and to the virtue of His blood. And now being secure of their own salvation, they show an intense solicitude for that of their brethren on the earth. Hence a portentous cry is heard from one of them: "Woe to the earth, and to the sea, because the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, knowing that he hath but a short time. And when the dragon saw that he was cast upon the earth, he persecuted the woman and her seed."

The whole of this narrative is profoundly significant. It is more than a vision, it is the history of what had passed in the heaven of the angels, blended with prophecy of what shall pass upon the earth. The principle involved in the heavenly as well as in the earthly conflict is faith in the Incarnation of the Son of God. The strife between the good and evil angels only ceases in the heavens to be transferred to the earth; and there the contest is renewed for the souls of men, who stand or fall, as the angels stood or fell, by their fidelity or infidelity to the mystery and grace of the Incarnation. The good angels are Christ's ministers to protect men from evil and draw them to the grace of Christ, contending against the evil spirits for our salvation; the bad angels are the ministers of their own malice and envy, contending for man's destruction; they lost their own good in refusing obedience and worship to the God made man, and for that very reason they seek to destroy the good of man, and to draw him into their own apostasy.

The Scriptures everywhere record this contest of spirits good and bad for the salvation or destruction of man; and even the pagan world was conscious of being surrounded by invisible powers inferior to God, that exercise a great influence over mankind for weal or woe.

The fall of Satan began in self-love, and developed into a pride so monstrous as to aim at independence. By an enormous abuse

of God's gifts, he sought to make himself the centre of good and of diminion. He was ambitious to usurp the headship of creation in place of the Word made man. His defeated pride burst forth into a fixed and unchangeable hatred of God, and into an equal hatred of man, because of the elevation of human nature in the Son of God above all the angelic hosts. Hence his hatred of the image of God in man. Hence his malicious enmity to all mankind. Hence his undying envy of that race of mortals which is destined to fill up the seats vacated in Heaven by him and his followers. As he plotted the destruction of the Divine Child revealed to him as born of woman, and has been plotting the destruction of man from that time to this, our Lord says of him, that "he was a man-slayer from the beginning."

The question now arises: Why did God permit Satan to enter the world, and to seek the destruction of man? Although the judgments of God are unsearchable, and His ways past finding out, yet He has not left us without some knowledge of those ways. Man must be tried, as the angels were tried, that those who are faithful may be approved. Man must be searched through, that he may know that his strength is not in himself. He must be tempted as the angels were tempted: how else shall he know the weakness of his nature and the gift and the power of divine grace? If he conquers, as the faithful angels conquered, he will be crowned with glory and honour. If he fall, as many angels fell, it is because of some terrible weakness, and it is good for him to find that weakness out, because it is unsuited to the everlasting kingdom. For the mercy of our heavenly Father has provided that his fall shall not be irreparable, and that he shall not perish in that just proving of his frailty, but that he shall be able to obtain all the strength that he needs from a new Head and Saviour of the human race.

Satan has no power over the man, if the man be only vigilant and faithful. He cannot oppress him with violence; he has no power to compel him against his will and inclination; whilst every caution is given him beforehand. Satan must find an ally in the man himself before he can overthrow him and take possession. He can only proceed by stratagems and beguilements. Each of the combatants has a helper; if Satan has his serpent, the man has the grace of God, as well as the command of God to steady him. The insidious assault is aimed at God as well as at the

man; and though the man may be worsted, God cannot be conquered. The man finds out his weakness; God provides the remedy. But if man had been withheld from the combat, Satan would not have been overthrown. St. Chrysostom puts the case in the following parable: "An athlete enters the arena and challenges two others to the combat. One of them is weak, unpractised, and soon vanquished in the conflict; the other is strong, and perfect in all athletic exercises. But if you refuse the challenge and prohibit the trial, whose honour would be injured? The honour of the weak one who is so quickly overcome, or the honour of the strong one who conquers for both?"*

God created man just to show His justice, and good to show his goodness, and placed him in paradise to show His bounty. But after his weakness had been revealed to Him, it was good for him to be cast out of paradise, that he might win greater fortitude under a sterner discipline. It was good for him to learn by his defeat and failure that his strength is in God, and not in himself, and that it is only through the divine power that Satan is vanquished and kept at a distance. Thus is was by the fall of one that strength and salvation came to all; for behold, God descends in a cause that is His own as well as ours.

It was against the woman and her Divine Child that Satan warred in Heaven. It was against the mother of mankind that he first spread his deceits on earth. He approaches her disguisedly, questions her insidiously, awakens her curiosity, allures her by the senses with desire of the forbidden fruit, prompts her to the pride of independence, and insinuates the ambition of becoming like to God, knowing good and evil. Thus outwardly allured by the tempter, she swells inwardly with pride against the command, and that pride breaks forth outwardly into manifold evil. She plucked the fruit, and did eat, and her disobedience was consummated. Then the woman became the tempter of the man. She gave him the fruit with ensnaring words and endearments, and he did eat, and his disobedience was consummated. But mark the result, "The eyes of both were opened, and they perceived themselves to be naked." Their sin revealed to them the whole of their infirmity.

Whilst sin is yet in progress, the inward pride from which it springs goes on increasing; it swells, it inebriates, it blinds the

* S. J. Chrysost. *Hom. De Diabolo Tentatore.*

soul, and that with the constantly augmented appearance of a greater good. But no sooner is the evil consummated than the eyes are opened, and the delusion vanishes. The soul has turned from God, and the spiritual life has departed. Nature remains, but its happy condition is changed into disorder, and is wounded to its centre. Clothed heretofore in soul with God's grace, and in body with innocence and purity, and having had no experience of a worse state of existence; the eyes of the human pair were opened to their past good by their present evil, and they find themselves naked both in body and soul. Having broken from the rule of God, their bodies break away from the rule of their enfeebled and discordant souls. Shame covers them with confusion; fear fills them with distress; the sickness of the soul in her loss; the sadness of the spirit in its bereavement of vital force; the sense of defilement: the hollowness of a life now first estranged from the life of God; and the terror of death; shoot the keenest pangs, as of spiritual dissolution, through the conscience into all their being. As far as they yet know they are not only fallen from God, but are cast away without the hope of deliverance; and in their dread of the divine judgment they hide themselves, as if, poor blinded mortals, that could be, from the presence of God.

But this is God's cause. It was in hatred of God, and of God's image in man, that Satan tempted the parents of the human race. It was in hatred of the predestined woman and her divine Child, whose revelation had tested his faith and the faith of his followers, and found them wanting, that inspired Satan to seek the destruction of the mother of mankind. The woman fell through Satan, and the man through the woman; they found out their nothingness, and were humbled to the dust. Still it is God's cause; and, what is worthy of profound reflection, the remedy was found in that very mystery which Satan and his angels had assailed in heaven, and for infidelity to which they were cast upon the earth.

The parents of mankind have abandoned their Creator, and have given their faith and obedience to His adversary; they have lost their claim to the divine protection, and deserve to be abandoned to themselves. But there is another side to the question, forasmuch as God's honour, His infinite greatness and divine dignity are involved. It is not becoming that His magnificent plan should be defeated through the machinations of an adversary whom He had cast out of heaven for his crimes. God created

man for His own glory, and predestined his nature to everlasting union with Himself; and inasmuch as the malice of Satan was more aimed at his Creator than at man, it became the Infinite Majesty and was most worthy the divine goodness, that He should rescue man from his misery, and defeat the malignity of Satan.

The greater part of the angels stood firm, and the angelic nature was saved and glorified in all its orders; but as the whole race of man was centred in Adam, the whole of humanity fell in him. The angels are pure spirits; they are more intelligent than man, and less exposed to temptation. To whatever they give themselves, whether to good or evil, they are more fixed in their determination. The angels that fell, went wrong of their own free action, and were under no evil influence; but man was seduced by the spirit of evil. Hence, whilst the fall of the angels was irreparable, man was created to fill their vacant seats, so that if man is saved, the divine plan is not defrauded of its end, and the seats of glory are filled.

St. Athanasius boldly declares that "It would be unworthy of God's goodness to suffer his own work in man to be destroyed through the devil's fraud. It would be unbecoming that God's workmanship in man should become extinct, whether through his own negligence or through the devil's imposition."* The devil could not be allowed so to gain his end as to deprive God of the glory of perfecting His own work. The great St. Leo has argued the point in these terms: "Forasmuch as the devil glorified that man had lost the divine gifts through his fraud and deception, and had so been stripped of his immortality, and placed under the stern sentence of death; and forasmuch as the same Satan had obtained a solace to his wickedness in bringing over a companion to his prevarication; it pleased God to change the first sentence passed on man, a sentence both just and deservedly severe, and passed on one whom He had established in honour. But this demanded the dispensation of God's secret counsel, that He who is unchangeable, and whose will cannot lose its benignity, may complete His fatherly design in a mystery more hidden; and that, however driven to crime by the devil's craft and wickedness, man may not perish, in opposition to the whole intention of God."†

* S. Athanas. *De Incarnatione Verbi.*

† S. Leo, *Serm.* 2, *In Nativitate Domini.*

This mystery, "hidden from the foundation of the world," although partly revealed to the angels for another purpose,—this secret within the divine reserves,—is the incarnation of the Word of God. God might have created another Adam, and have endowed him with new grace; but what could this new man have done for the old Adam? What security was there that another mere creature would not have failed like the first? Some mighty angel might have been sent to vanquish Satan, as Michael did of old, but how could he have atoned for man? How could he have given him that grace of reconciliation, which must be the work of God? How could he have given a new and heavenly birth unto the countles children of Adam? The sin of man has a certain relative infinity in its malice, as being against the infinite sanctity and Majesty of God. The divine goodness has been defeated in its aim, and the divine gifts have been violated by the sin of man; God's glorious workmanship has also been defiled. The fallen Adam is the destined father of countless children, all as yet incorporated in him, and all to be born of him in the course of time; they are predestined to cover the earth through the long ages, yet they are all by nature partakers of his fall.

It is a case demanding a divine intervention of the most extraordinary kind. For it is a far less work of divine power and wisdom to create man than to recreate him from a moral ruin. This calls for the intervention of the firmest, the most profound, the most divine of moral powers. As the iniquity is human, it must be atoned for in a human way; but as it has a relative infinity of guilt, as being committed against God, the atonement must be divine. The root of the evil is pride of heart, the venomous element of all sin, and this must be supplanted by a new humility. Its outcome is the loss of subjection to God, and disobedience to his voice, and this must be exchanged for a new submission and a new obedience. The inward rebellion of the will issues forth in the rebellion of the senses, defiling the whole man, and this must be rectified through suffering and self denial. The whole man is turned from God, and through divine power must the whole man be turned to God anew.

Divine life must, therefore, enter into our human nature, not as it is sinful, but into a human nature divinely prepared and untouched by sin. Anticipating the merits of the redemption to be wrought, a daughter of Adam was preserved pure from all sin

and from her that pure humanity was divinely created, in which the Son of God laid hold of death, and by His death defeated death, and restored us to life. Each kind of sin must have its expiation before the virtue it has destroyed can have its supernatural restoration; not only for Adam and Eve, but also for the myriads of mortals that spring from their marvellous fertility, this expiation, this conquest of sin, of death and the devil, this humility, this self-denial, this fortitude of obedience, this grace of all the virtues will be needed; that God may accomplish His grand intention of securing the final object of man's creation.

The mercy of God is inseparable from His justice, and His justice from His mercy. How shall these divine attributes act together in such a way that both may be completely satisfied? As justice is no longer left in man, how shall it appear in him anew? How shall mercy descend to him in the company of justice? God brings forth the hidden mystery of His eternal counsel. The Word of God through whom all things were made, hath alone the power to renew all things. And unquestionably the greatest renovation which calls for the divinest power, is to replace injustice with justice, and pride with humility; to raise fallen souls out of the abyss of sin, and to bring them back to God from that infinite distance to which they were banished from his friendship.

In obedience to his Father's will, the Son of God takes human nature into His person, and makes that nature everlastingly secure. He does this before the ages in divine intention, and actually in due course of time. He takes the headship of the human race in place of the fallen Adam; and with the headship of the human race, the headship also of the angels, and of all creation. In the person of God, but in the nature of man, yet in the purity and sanctity of his divinity, He offers that human nature in atonement, in justice, in intercession for his adopted brethren, upon which the Father is well pleased to look. He shall be born of that pure and predestined virgin who was revealed to the angels, and was described to men by the prophets, born not of man, but of the operation of the Holy Spirit; and so shall have his human origin in a way wholly different from the other children of Adam. As Satan brought sin and death into the world through the first woman, he shall be vanquished and his arms taken from him through the child of the second woman. And as the human race formed one corporation with the fallen Adam, they shall by faith be

incorporated with a better Adam, inseparable from God, from whom grace and justice shall descend as from the head to the members; yet so that He first offer atonement for the sins of men, and substitute His divine humility and obedience for our pride and rebellion.

Let me now ask your gravest attention to the following sentences of St. Leo, for in them he sounds the whole moral depth of the mystery of human redemption: "The whole victory whereby our Saviour conquered the devil and the world was conceived in humility, and was worked out by humility. His predestined days began and ended under persecution. Sufferings came upon the child, and the meekness of the child came to the suffering man; because in one and the same descent of majesty, he took a human birth, and received a human death. When, therefore, Almighty God took up a cause so exceedingly bad as our cause was, He made it good by the prerogative of humility, and through this humility He destroyed both sin and death. . . . For this reason the whole sum of the wisdom of Christian discipline is to be found; neither in voluble speech, nor in keen disputations, nor in the appetite for praise and glory; but it consists in true humility, freely accepted, and this from His mother's womb to His agony on the Cross, the Lord Jesus Christ chose for all strength, and taught that strength to us."*

But to this profoundest view of the incarnation, wherein the Son of God sounded all the depths of the infirm creature, we must add the most exalted view of this divine economy; that glory to God in the highest, which arose from the manifestation of the noblest of all possible creations; a creation recapitulating all spiritual and earthly creations in one most perfect composition of all that was highest in heaven with all that was humblest in humanity clasped for ever in hypostatic union with the Eternal Word. This is the very ecstasy of creation, the Son of God going out of Himself, as it were, to embrace all the elements of creation from the highest to the lowest in His person. For in Christ the Father raised up both a spiritual and an earthly creation into union with the godhead of the Son, to sit at His right hand, and to renew all things heavenly and earthly in Him.

From the contemplation of the great mystery preparing to descend upon the earth, let us return to our first parents in their

* S. Leo, *Serm.* 7, *in Epiphaniam.*

fall and desolation. We beheld them naked in soul and body, captives to the devil, trembling with fear, dazed with trouble and confusion, and expecting the judgment of God. The Lord descends into the garden of paradise, and is heard walking in human form, and speaking with a human voice, as already preluding the incarnation. The guilty pair attempt, in their terror, to conceal themselves. God calls them; he questions them. They answer by evasions and by mutual recriminations. Their shame and confusion contend with their self-love, and reveal the broken condition of their souls. The voice of the Lord recalls them to their conscience, and they hear their sentence, which, however humbling to pride and hard to flesh and blood, is a sentence of mercy. They are cast out of paradise, as the disobedient angels were cast out of heaven; but they go forth in hope, whilst the angels went forth in despair. They are subjected to a severe and humbling discipline of labour and suffering; but this penalty is imposed as a medicine to their pride, and as a safeguard to their weakness. They go forth in hope, because they have heard of their promised redemption in the sentence pronounced on their destroyer: "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; she shall crush thy head, and thou shalt lie in wait for her heel."

Well did Satan know his adversary; not the seed of the man before him, but the seed of the woman; the child of that woman of whom he already had foreknowledge; of that woman revealed to him in heaven, whose child was taken up to God and to His throne. The child of that woman shall crush his head, and defeat his enterprise of destroying the human race.

That you may better understand the great cause that is pleading between heaven and earth, let us pass in meditation through the eternal gates, and enter the holy court, where man and his tempter are arraigned before the eternal justice. If the awful presence of the Divine Justice fills our poor nature with dread, behold side by side with that August Majesty sit the gentle forms of Grace and Mercy, prepared to moderate the severity of judgment. There are three parties to the cause—the offended Majesty of God; man the criminal; and Satan, the instigator of the crime.

The first plea is against Satan. That being the enemy of God, from pure malice he has invaded the rights of God; and that

exercising a malicious stratagem and fraud, he has seduced God's creature and servant, made for His service and glory, and has withdrawn him from his duty and obedience to his sovereign Lord. That by false statements he has led the man to aspire with treasonable pride to be as God. That after withdrawing him from God and his salvation, he has kept him in an evil bondage under his own power, and that Satan has therefore incurred a greater punishment than he has yet received for his former crimes.

The second plea is against man. That he also has invaded the rights of God, and has treated the Divine authority with contempt and disobedience; that he has withdrawn his faith from God who made him, and has given it to the enemy of God; that he has risen up in a revolting spirit of pride, and has aspired to be as God; that he has deprived his Lord and Creator of that homage and due service which both as a rational creature, and as the representative of the whole earthly creation, he owed to God; and that he has done this in the face of a divine command, and in defiance of the light and grace with which his Divine Master had endowed him. And that however he may have been deceived and misled by an enemy in the guise of a friend, he has acted against the known will of God, and of his own free will and choice, and with deep ingratitude to his Divine Benefactor. He has, therefore, incurred the sentence of death, both of soul and body.

But there is a third case before the court of eternal justice, a case that pleads to mercy as well as to justice. For Satan has inflicted great evils on man, and has inflicted them under the fraudulent promise of good. Under the malicious pretext of rendering him a great service, he has deprived him of all his goods, and even of the hope and expectation of his supreme and eternal good. Forasmuch as man is God's creature, and that he owes subjection and obedience to God alone, Satan holds an unjust possession of him. But, forasmuch as man gave himself to Satan of his own free act and will, he is justly left in the bonds of Satan. For although Satan has no inherent right to take possession of man, and to treat him oppressively, yet man has through his own fault and folly deserved the bondage and oppression that he suffers. For granting he was deceived, he was deceived with his eyes open; and after the Lord his God had given him full caution, and had enforced

that caution with a clear command, he fell into Satan's snares. But he has no valid excuse for doing so, because he was not ignorant of his duty, and he knew that he ought not to covet or desire what was against the known will of God, as it was openly declared to him both by his internal light and by an external command. In consequence of his prevarication and sin, therefore, man is justly subject to Satan; but forasmuch as his adversary has acted a false, fraudulent, and malicious part, he is not justly subject to Satan.

But the cause between man and Satan is secondary to the cause between man and God. He has deserted his Creator for whom he was made. He has deserted his faith and trust in his Divine Benefactor, who provided him with all things good and desirable, and who contemplated his advancement in due time to His own immortal glory. Moreover his Lord had appointed him His representative on earth, had given him the dominion of the visible creation, and had not only formed him to His own image and likeness, but had made him the head, the heart and voice of the world, that through him all the creatures beneath him might worship, honour, and obey their Creator, and might be subject to God through his piety. By his revolt he has not only ruined himself beyond his power to repair, but has defeated God's design over his creation at large, and brought deterioration upon the entire world.

This is the position of the case, and the sum of the cause. Still, if man can only find an advocate and a protector to bring Satan into court, his right to hold possession of man may be repelled. No such an advocate, however, can be found, unless God Himself take up the cause. But unless man first returns to God, God cannot take up his cause. The divine justice must first receive satisfaction for his apostasy and sin. He must first make atonement to God, and purge his contempt by suitable reparation. But this he cannot do. Having turned himself away from God, the grace of God has left him; and wanting grace and the subjection to God which grace gives, he cannot turn to God anew, or find anything within him that is worthy of God. Deeply wounded and terribly disordered from his fall, he is powerless to rise again. Having preferred the creature to the Creator, his sin is relatively infinite; he has no justice in him that will enable him to approach the eternal justice. How, then, can the

sinful creature offer his sinful self for an atonement? This would not be an atonement but an insult. Sunk in spiritual death, what life or justice has he to offer for a reparation?

The irrational creatures are at his disposal, and he may offer them in sacrifice. But how can irrational creatures atone for the crimes of spiritual beings made in the image of God? They can only receive a violence which they instinctively resist. Can he offer man for man? The innocent man has ceased to exist, and the sinful man alone remains. But a sinful sacrifice is an abomination to the Lord. As man can neither offer himself, or anything less than himself, that can in the least atone, or find anything in him that is just, he has no escape from condemnation, no means of deliverance from everlasting death.

But God would not have His work to perish. He would not have His glorious plan of creation, and the still more glorious plan for its glorification, to become a defeat and a failure, and that through the malice of His own apostate creature. In His divine reserves, the almighty and all-wise God has a yet more magnificent plan for restoring and perfecting His creation, and of conquering evil with the greatest good. He comes, therefore, to His fallen creature both in mercy and in justice, and delivers him from death by a most wonderful invention of justice. Yet before man can have a just and reasonable deliverance, justice must be satisfied on both sides of the case. For God must have a just cause for delivering him, and man must have a just way of escape from his injustice. But these God alone can provide.

Mercy and Grace step forward to reconcile the claims of justice in a way most wonderful. Mercy and grace and justice unite in one divine person, and in that divine person God gives to man another man, "holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens," and He shall be offered in the place of fallen man. That this compensation may be worthy the justice of God, this man is incomparably greater than Adam and all his race. The Son of God is made man, and partakes the nature of Adam in a pure and divine way, and becoming a victim in His humanity of humility and obedience, He offers His life and death to God the Father in atonement for the injustice of the whole human race. He gives himself to mankind, and becomes the brother of men, that from mankind He may receive Himself anew as their expiatory victim. In the words of Isaias: "A child

is born to us, and a Son is given to us, and the government is on His shoulders: and He shall be called Wonderful, Councillor, the Mighty God, the Father of the world to come, the Prince of Peace." As He is given by God to man, Christ is the gift of divine mercy and grace; as He is offered to God by man, His offering is the justice due from mankind to God. He is no sooner born than he begins to propitiate the Father; for which reason the angels sing: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace to men of good will." He first restores man to God in Himself; and then He offers Himself for all men to God; after which God smiles once more upon the earth with a mercy super-exalted over His judgment.

But man has still to escape the penalties of his pride and disobedience, and to purge his contempt with a condign satisfaction. This also was compensated by the son of God, in His free acceptance of the humiliations and sufferings which for Himself He did not owe, and He attached them with all His obedience to the dignity and merit of His divine person. "Being in the form of God," says St. Paul, "He thought it not robbery to be equal to God; but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man, and in habit found as a man, He humbled himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the cross." Except, therefore, for the voluntary humiliations and sufferings of the Holy and Innocent one, freely accepted and freely offered for mankind, man had no escape from condemnation. But Christ delivered him from the everlasting penalties due to his pride and disobedience, provided he accept that deliverance, and is willing to return to God through the paths ordained for his return. As for sinful man, he suffers no more than he has been justly ordained to suffer for his contempt, and therefore can pay nothing towards his deliverance, which is wholly the work of the innocent and divine man.

When Christ had atoned for our guilt by His birth and death, and had paid our debt, there was no place left for Satan's calumnious accusations. He lost his dominion over man so soon as he chooses to accept his divine deliverer, and is freed from the devil's bondage. Judgment was exercised against his claims in the passion of Christ, when He took the handwriting that was against us, attached it to His Cross, and blotted it out with His blood. Once incorporated with Christ and possessed of His

blood, we may say of Satan, with the Psalmist: "When my enemy shall be turned back, they shall be weakened and shall perish before thy face. For thou hast maintained my judgment and my cause: thou hast sat on the throne, who judgest justice."

Upon the cause between man and God, judgment is reserved to the end of life; and if in the interval through Christ he is reconciled to God, he may await that judgment without fear. For having destroyed death by death, and obtained the reversal of our judgment, by the rights which he has won for us, Christ raises us up from death to life; and in token of this power He descended into hell from His Cross, broke the brazen gates asunder, and delivered those spirits from their captivity who had believed the promise, and had descended thither to await the coming of their Divine Deliverer.

Christ took away our reproach and restored our honour. For in what does that honour consist but in the likeness of God? When man aspired to be as God, he lost that honour, and, becoming foolish, he did not understand. Then he had to suffer the reproach of his Creator: "Behold, Adam hath become as one of us, knowing good and evil." When the first of men heard this terrible rebuke, one might almost imagine that the Psalmist at a later time but repeated the earnest entreaty of his soul: "Thou hast rebuked the proud: they are cursed who decline from thy commandments. Remove from me reproach and contempt." Most wonderfully has God removed our reproach and contempt. For "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bring forth a son, and his name is the God with us. He shall eat milk and butter, that he may know how to reprove evil and choose good." These few words embrace the foundation of our faith. The Father of our race aspires to be as God, and one of the divine persons of the Holy Trinity exclaims: "Behold, Adam hath become as one of us, knowing good and evil." Just, awful and severe, is this ironical reproach. Yet has it received a merciful direction to reveal to man his weakness and his folly. But how is this reproach removed from those who have taken refuge in the humility of Christ? For they may say even with glowing truth: Behold, God has become as one of us; and the voice of contempt is changed into the voice of praise. Christ knows good with a perfect knowledge and experience. He also knows evil with a perfect knowledge, though without experience. He knows good

that He may impart it to us; He knows evil that He may deliver us from it. That also which was so bitter and ironical a reproof, when addressed to the first Adam, has become the most authentic truth when addressed to the second Adam. From the voice of the Holy Trinity it can be said to Him: "Behold, Adam hath become as one of us," because of His divinity; whilst from the voice of humanity it may be said to Him: "Behold, Adam hath become as one of us," because of His humanity.*

As our creation was the work of power, our redemption is the work of mercy. Mercy has come down from heaven in the divinity of our Saviour, and justice has sprung up from the earth in His humanity. The mystery of redemption is the mercy of re-creation, and of regeneration in the blood of Christ. And the Holy Scriptures, which are ever concentrating our mind and heart upon this work of redemption, as either promised or fulfilled, are inexhaustible in exhibiting the works and ways of mercy, which all gather round or flow out from this inexhaustible fountain of mercy. "He hath not dealt with us according to our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For according to the height of the heavens above the earth: He hath strengthened His mercy towards them that fear Him."

It is also written, that "the Lord is sweet to all who call upon Him;" that "He loveth mercy and judgment;" that "His tender mercies are above all His works;" and that "the earth is full of His mercy." This broad, deep, and inexhaustible stream of mercy flows into all the ways of human nature, and beats ever at the doors of proud and obdurate hearts to find an entrance; it flows, and ever continues to flow, from the fountain of life opened in the mystery of our redemption. Christ is our mercy, and His grace is the power of His mercy, sweet yet strong, and sometimes even terrible in its first assaults on hearts given up to pride and malice. Mercy is patient, is long suffering, is not easily turned from its purpose. It watches the wilful, wayward heart of man, ready to take the first opening, and to bring by that opening the gift of repentance. The divine attribute of mercy comes in every form and shape of grace; preventing, soliciting, attracting; inbreathing, arguing, entreating, rebuking; chastising souls away from evil with stripes in compassion for their misery; striking

* See Hugo de Sancto Victore, *Dialog. De Sacramentis Legis Natural, et Script. per totum.*

the headstrong from their pride with terror; visiting in gentle mood those who are softened by affliction. The grace of mercy humbles the proud, and consoles the humble; lifts up the sincere mind with faith, inspires the desponding heart with hope, and quickens the obedient soul with the flame of charity. Mercy abides her time for the returning sinner, embraces the penitent with benignity, and descends to the humble with sweetness; infuses strength into the desolate with secrecy; rewards the merciful with superabounding mercy. As Christ is our mercy, and pride alone resists the operation of His mercy, humble souls, vacant of themselves, are the animated, beautiful and capacious vessels of His mercy; since "He endured with much patience vessels of wrath, fitted for destruction, that He might show the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He hath prepared unto glory." But in this world of grief and trouble, the mercies of grace are not the joys of the blessed, but the consolations of our exile; therefore we say: "Let Thy mercy be to my consolation."

LECTURE XII.

THE RESTORATION OF MAN.

"Behold I make all things new."—APOCALYPSE xxi. 5.

TO cultivate the body at the cost of the soul is to subvert the order of life; and, by a parity of truth, to cultivate earthly science at the cost of spiritual wisdom, is to subvert the order of knowledge, and to sacrifice the wisdom of the mind. What is science but the knowledge of things in their causes? But the causes of material things are spiritual. And what is wisdom but the knowledge of the highest things in their highest causes, and in the ultimate ends for which they exist? Man is placed in this world as a middle term between earth and heaven, holding by his body of the earth, and by his soul of heaven. He is placed between the superior good of heaven and the inferior good of this world, that by the help of God and his own virtue he may ascend by degrees from earthly to divine things. He is a middle good with a great capacity for divine good, that by the light and grace of God he may exercise the sublime office of spiritualizing his whole nature, and exalting it in mind and heart in the direction of eternal truth and good, and may so use the elements of this world as to bring them into the service of his spiritual life and intelligence. But if he reverses this noble order of things, and directs his mind and conduct to the materializing of his mind and the sensualizing of his life, instead of ascending to superior good, he loses even his middle good, and descends in all his nature to a degraded state and position altogether unworthy of his humanity, and perverts both his gifts and his nature But the wise man is he who is intelligent upon himself, who understands why God has placed him in this position, and who is

recognized in these words of the Psalm: "Blessed is the man whose help is in Thee: he hath disposed ascensions in his heart, in the vale of tears, in the place where he is set."

There is a vanity of science, which is not less vicious than the moral vanity of the heart—a vanity wholly given to the elements of this world, to the exclusion of the solid things of the soul. This vanity vitiates both the man and his science, sometimes even to the absurd extent of his imagining that the science of this world may stand in place both of religion and of the highest and purest virtue. Yet such a one sees nothing in its highest cause nor in its final end. To him all is as though it were suspended on nothing, and all as though it tended to nothing. We may justly call this vanity, as Solomon discovered many ages ago, in surveying the tendencies of the natural sciences, when cultivated apart from God. And vanity is vacuity. Like the devoting of the soul to the body, it leaves the inward man vacant, and his spirit void; for neither the body nor the things of the body can fill the spirit, or give it rest, or bring the desired fruits to its toils.

The garment of science is not the body of science, nor the body the soul, nor the soul the life of science. There can be no soul of science for him who is contented with the outward and material garment of visible things, or with the mere body of this world, and who cannot, or rather will not, ascend in mind from things visible to things invisible. Nor can he pass from the soul to the life of science, who will not ascend from things created to their Divine Creator, to their first and final cause, to the Divine Illuminator of all, and to the Divine Perfector of all. It is a marked weakness of such men that, failing in wisdom, they do not estimate things so much according to their real or relative value in the order of good, or in the scale of things, as by their newness, their way of affecting the curiosity of the mind, and their interest as matters of inquiry. So that they are inclined to look upon all things as equal to the mind, with the only distinction of their being novel, rare, or curious. But with this tendency of mind, with this minute philosophy, the grand view of the greater things is too apt to be lost sight of, and the great and universal truths, which God designed for all men, are too apt to recede from sight. Not because they are not present, and visible as ever, but because these minute philosophers have contracted

their vision, and bent it downwards; and they next deny what they have disenabled themselves to see.

But all truth belongs to God, who is its first possessor. And all truth exists in a pre-eminent way in God; and the nearer we are to God the more truth we see, and by having this greater truth are the more like in mind to God. And be it ever remembered that truth is the oldest of all things, whilst man is both new and fond of novelties. Changeable in himself, he is fond of change. But let him who seeks the divine truth remember that it comes from God, and can never be devised by man, for it is most ancient, fixed, and unchangeable. And our adherence to that ancient truth makes us of a constant and unchangeable, yet of an ever-growing and fruitful mind. For our mind is like the fruit-tree in this respect, that if rooted in the truth it is fruitful, but if it is constantly shifting from opinion to opinion, it can bear no solid fruit.

All things in the creation have their lights and shadows. There is nothing in this visible world, from the sun in the heavens to the pebble that rolls under our feet; from the man with whom we are familiar to the insect we examine with the microscope, that has not a side that is in light and another that is in obscurity. Whatever we know in this world, whether by perception or by the testimony of others, is partly known and partly unknown; yet we have sufficient knowledge to secure certainty, sufficient for conviction, for assent, for belief, and for our guidance. And nothing can be more irrational, nothing more unphilosophical, than to argue from the obscure against the clear side of any fact or truth, as if the one was the denial of the other; whereas it is that which is clear that vouches for that which is obscure in one and the same subject. Yet this is the common method of sceptics and unbelievers.

But if our natural knowledge presents us with both lights and shadows; with clear evidence, attended by obscurities beyond the reach of our limited mind and faculties; how much more must we expect this to be the case when our minds are brought into contact with the divine and supernatural truths of revelation. Nor must it be forgotten, that in His divine economy of revelation, the God of heaven contemplates a twofold purpose; the one to enlighten us with divine truth, and to guide us by that light on our way to heaven; the other to try our faith and

obedience. He, therefore, who asks for a perfect light all round and through a mystery of faith, whose seat is in God, as the condition of accepting it, is even much more absurd than he who expects a perfect light all round and through the objects of nature, whose place is in this world, before he assents to their truth and existence. The light given with divine revelation is so tempered, that the good may use it with confidence, and are never without sufficient light, whilst it is in the power of the evil-disposed to refuse that light. For God has made His revelation the test and trial whether we will freely accept His truth by faith or not. There is light enough, and much more than enough, for them who are humble-minded and willing to see. There is obscurity enough to test their spirits who are proud-minded and unwilling to see. There is light to enlighten the faithful, and obscurity to humble them. There is obscurity enough for the unfaithful man to blind himself with, whilst there is light enough to condemn him for his willing blindness. There is brightness enough in the doctrines of faith to make our belief reasonable, and darkness enough to make our adhesion a meritorious obedience, and an act of fidelity to Divine authority. At the same time, in the precepts and councils of faith there is an exquisite order, beauty, and light, which attract the love and obedience of the heart; whilst their difficulty arises in the course of their exercise, making them the meritorious work of virtue.

The principles embodied in these remarks will be no unsuitable preparation for entering upon the grand theme of human restoration, a theme which involves the greatest of all human interests.

No sooner did man dare to break the law of God, than he fell on the instant from that high honour to which God had raised him. So long as he walked in the path of rectitude, his heart was pure and innocent, and he was clothed in the white stole of justice as with a garment of grace and beauty. Loving God with His beautiful gift of love, he was loved by God as with a father's love. The unfailing light of celestial truth shone to his mind, and a frank and complete integrity gave serene power to his will. All his appetites obeyed his will with calmness, and he held the sovereign dominion not only over his body, but over all that in Nature was inferior to himself. Peace and joy abounded in his heart, and his happiness was augmented with the certain hope of eternal life, and of rising after a time to supreme beatitude with

God. But, alas! no sooner has he drunk the deadly venom of sin, than all this is taken from him, and he falls as a king from his throne.

What tongue can tell the evils that fall upon man when he falls away from God? The loss of his spiritual gifts destroys his communion with heaven; the horrible turpitude of guilt defiles his nature to its centre; the divine love for him is changed into wrath, and fills him with terror; he is enchained in a hard bondage to the devil, who seduced him; his cupidities have arisen over his weakened powers of control, and rage against him; fears and troubles agitate him; the dread of an eternal as well as of a natural death pursues him; the loss of light, and the obscuring influences of sin, leave a darkness on his mind that even weakens his intelligence of the laws of nature, over which he was appointed to hold dominion, and clouds all his faculties and powers.

Had he any hope of deliverance from his great and many evils his lot would be less sad and mournful; but by his own conduct he has closed up every way of escape. Before he can be delivered from his fallen state and disgraceful servitude, the divine justice must be satisfied, the divine honour repaired, an equitable atonement must be offered for his sins, and a just price paid for his redemption. But what good has he to offer to God? What life can he substitute for the life in God that he has lost? Having lost the supernatural element of life which made him pleasing to God, what grace has he left with which to make his offering acceptable to God? He has nothing left him but his fallen nature, separated from God, weakened, darkened, defiled with injustice and disorder, and already forfeited to death and everlasting punishment. Even the human race to be yet born from him, is involved in his condemnation, because God had made him the one fontal principle of all humanity. There is no way left open from man to God; the only possible way open is from God to man. Deliverance may come from Heaven; it cannot possibly come from the earth.

The Fathers of the Church have argued from the omnipotence of God that he might have effected the deliverance of man and his restoration to justice in some other way; but that in His infinite goodness and mercy, and for His own Divine glory, He chose the most magnificent and generous way, the way most abounding in goodness and condescension, the way most

necesary to accomplish a most secure, as well as a most plentiful and overbounding redemption and salvation to man, through the incarnation of His Eternal Word.

In the first place, it was the most secure, because man in his weakness might fall again. But by the Incarnation of the Son of God, human nature, as the fountain of redemption and salvation, was made everlastingly secure, by its inseparable union with the person of the Son of God. In the second place, the Incarnation of the Eternal Word was most singularly adapted to the weakness and to the requirements of man. For man is a creature of sense as well as mind, and is more inclined to things visible than to things invisible, and more easily passes to things invisible through the things that are visible. The whole world, therefore, is so made by God, that through visible things we may be able to ascend more easily to the knowledge of things invisible. But now, since his fall, man is "carnal, sold unto sin;" and it is, therefore, still more needful for him that truth, and justice, and the power of redemption and salvation, should come to him from heaven in a visible, and even in a human form, with human affections and sympathies, that he may be drawn back to God and to his salvation even "by the cords of Adam."

In the third place, the magnificent scheme of the Incarnation is the most glorious to God. For however great and god-like it is to create good, it is incomparably greater to conquer evil with good, and to destroy that evil through the creation of a greater good. But the Incarnation of the Son of God is the most magnificent of all creations, most magnificent above all creations both of angels and of men; most magnificent in the personal union of that creation with the Eternal Word, through whom all things were created; and most magnificent in its infinite condescension. And what adds immeasurably to this magnificence, God takes occasion of the great evil with which His creatures oppose Him to accomplish this grandest of creations, that He may overcome evil with the creation and endowment of superabounding good.

Then came forth the most wonderful manifestation of the attributes of God in their most magnificent exercise. To use the words of St. John of Damascus: The mystery of the Incarnation showed forth the united goodness and wisdom, and justice and power of God. His goodness, in that He did not despise the infirmity of His own creature; His justice, in that when man was

vanquished, He caused his tyrant to be vanquished in another way by man; nor did He rescue man himself from death by violence; His wisdom, in that He provided a most ample redemption at a most costly price; and His infinite power, because nothing can be greater in the exercise of power than that God should be made man.*

Returning to the Divine goodness, as in this glorious mystery it is in the highest degree manifested, we must remember that the nature of God is goodness, and that it belongs to goodness to communicate good, and to the Supreme Goodness to communicate Himself to the creature in a supreme way. But this He has accomplished, as St. Augustine observes, when he united a created nature to Himself, and that in a way so intimate that the soul and flesh of man became one in person with the Eternal Word.†

Wherefore, in the solemn words of the God incarnate Himself: "God so loved the world, as to give His only begotten Son; that whosoever believeth in Him, may not perish, but may have eternal life. For God sent not His son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him." He came not only to heal our misery, but to promote us, as became so divine a Redeemer and Benefactor, to greater good than we had lost by our sin. What faith can be so firm and assured as that which rests upon the very Word of Truth, appearing visibly in the world, speaking in our own nature to us, living the truth before our eyes, conversing with men, face to face and soul to soul, as a man speaks with his friend. "That man might walk with confidence in the truth," says St. Augustine, "the Son of God, the very truth, took the nature of man, to found and establish the truth in us."‡

What could raise our hope so high, or give so firm a trust in the goodness and mercy of God, as that the Son of God should partake our very nature? He has become one of us, to inspire us with full confidence in His loving dispositon to do all things for us. He who has given us Himself, will He not give us all things? He tells us, that we have only to ask and to receive. What, again, could be more eminently calculated to bring us back to the

* S. J. Damascus, *De Orthodox Fide*, L. III. c. 1.
† S. August. *De Trinitate*, L. XIII. c. 17.
‡ S. August. *De Civitate Dei*, L. XIII. c. 2.

love of God, than a proof so great and striking of the love of God for us? "God commendeth His charity towards us: because, when as yet we were sinners, according to the time, Christ died for us." One of the greatest causes of his coming in the flesh, was to show the exceeding love of God for us. It might have been difficult for man to love God, if he did not know that God loved him; but God hath first loved us, and has exhibited His love in a condescension so marvellous, with sufferings so great, in a work so full of love, that we must indeed be hardened if we return not love for love.

Then what a good, and what a very needful good, has been received by us in the example of a perfect human life, which the Son of God has set before us; so that we have only to follow Him in order to perfect our life and secure our happiness. As St. Augustine pithily expresses it: "Our duty does not consist in following man whom we see, but in following God whom we do not see; and for this reason God was made man, and presented himself to man, that man might see Him."* Again, in the mystery of the Word made flesh, we have the actual proof that man may be a partaker of the divinity, which is the true beatitude of man and the final end of human life. For we are taught by the very fact that God is made man, that our human nature is capable of union with God.

But if the Incarnation of the Son of God is the most glorious and efficacious of all designs for the promotion of our spiritual good, it is equally the most efficacious for the removal of that evil which is the great obstacle to all good. Why should men any longer fear the spiritual powers of evil, after they are associated with God in their own nature? For He has exalted that nature above all spiritual creations, and filled that nature with divine power to conquer every spirit of evil, so that they tremble at the very name of Jesus, and fly at its invocation. From the mystery of the Incarnation we also learn to understand the great dignity of human nature, that we may neither dishonour nor defile that nature in ourselves. For God has shown us how high a place our human nature holds in the creation by the very fact that He has sent His Son to appear to men as truly man. "Acknowledge thy dignity, oh, Christian," says St. Leo: "and as thou art made a partaker of the divine nature, do not thou degenerate in thy conduct by falling

* S. August. *Serm. De Nativ. Domini*, 22, *De Temp.*

back into thy former vileness."* Then the mystery of the Incarnation puts an end to the false and self-confident presumption of man; for by it we learn that the grace of God whereby we are saved is given us in Christ, without any previous merit or deserving on our part. And the pride of man, which is the source of all evil, and the greatest of all hindrances to his union with God, is rebuked and healed through the humility of the Son of God.

But the greatest achievement of power combined with love and mercy, which the Son of God has accomplished in His humanity, is the deliverance of man from the servitude of sin. Satan was overcome by the justice of the man Christ Jesus, who gave the fullest satisfaction for us. No mere man could satisfy for the whole human race, nor did it become God to give satisfaction for the sins committed against Him. It was needful, therefore, that Christ should be both God and man. This St. Leo has explained in words to be ever remembered: "Infirmity was taken up by Power, humility by Majesty, and what was mortal by Eternity; that, as a suitable remedy for our evils, one and the same Mediator between God and men, might die in his human nature, and rise again by His divine nature. For were He not true God, He would not have brought us healing, and were He not true man, He would not have been our example."†

St. Athanasius observes that our knowledge that the world was created through the Word of God prepares us worthily to understand why the world should be restored to the Father through the same Word of God. For it can never be contradictory, that the Father who made the world through His Word, should heal the same world through the self-same Word.‡ In this remark St. Athanasius but follows the inspired order of teaching which sublimely opens the Gospel of St. John. Although certain pagan philosophers obtained a glimpse of the Word of God as the power through which the world was created, they might have obtained what they imperfectly knew from the chosen nation. St. Paul assures us that "by faith we know that the world was framed by the Word of God; that from invisible things visible things might be made." As by faith we also know that the Divine Word is "the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world."

* S. Leo, *Serm.* 1, *De Nativ.*

† Id. *ibid.* See S. Thomas, *Sum.* p. 3. *qs.* 1 *et* 2.

‡ S. Athanas. *De Incarnat. Verbi*, c. 1.

Here let us pause. What makes this world so wonderful, as contemplated in the light of God, is its resting on the invisible force of the Word of God, and its being presided over by His invisible light, of which the light of the sun is the visible symbol. The force of the Eternal Word by which the world and all things therein is upheld, and the light with which He enlightens every intelligence, is known to faith, and in part is understood through faith. The deeper we go into the visible things of this world, the more we come upon something mysterious and unsearchable, which escapes both our sense and mind. Everywhere we move in the midst of invisible power. What we call the most solid things, because they most resist our senses, are capable of being changed into invisible forms, in which they are much more the objects of science. And science knows well, that with sufficient power the whole visible world could be changed into elements invisible to mortal sense. But this implies the mind and power of God.

If matter be so mysterious, and capable of such subtle changes of form, how much more profound and mysterious to us is the substance and nature of spiritual life, whose effects we see, whose power we feel, but to whose essence we cannot penetrate. And how much more is our mind and spiritual life surrounded with inexhaustible mysteries that recede on every side into eternity. The word of God is behind the whole creation, and embraces the whole creation, "upholding all things by the word of His power." He is therefore described in the Book of Wisdom as the wisdom that "reaches from end to end of all things mightily, and disposes of all things sweetly."

The word of God is equally over the whole creation, enlightening all intelligences, and making what truth He chooses intelligible to us; and is in the whole creation, renewing all things, except the minds that resist His light, and the wills that use their freedom to resist His grace. "He was in the world," says St. John, "and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not."

It is the test of the creations of God, as opposed to the inventions of men, that they everywhere rest upon unfathomable foundations, and that beyond a certain depth their mystery is unsearchable. But how much more sublime, profound and unsearchable in its depths is that divinest of creations, in which the Eternal Word and Creator of all things takes a created nature

up to His own person; in which "the plenitude of the Godhead dwelt bodily." High as the throne of God, profound as eternity, yet descending into the lowest depths of humanity, the incarnation of the Son of God, whilst made visible and sensible to mortal eyes and ears, is unsearchable in its elevation, unfathomable in its depths, and inexhaustible in truth and grace. Familiar to the faith and love of the child is He who became a child for our salvation. Homely in all his human life, as a divine friend and consoler to the poor and to the working man, is He who became poor, and a working man, to give an example to all. To the sufferer He comes as one who has suffered more, to the desolate as one who has endured greater desolation, bringing healing to their wounds, and strength to their weakness. Whilst to the humble student of divine things, and to the devout contemplative, He opens light after light and truth after truth, and one degree of more perfect life after another; and all this truth and life of love grows day by day from Him, who is the divine sun of truth and life. Yet the end is but as the beginning of the inexhaustible riches of His light and treasures of His grace. But after all the light and knowledge which the most enlightened doctor and fervid saint have derived from the contemplation of this mystery, be it an inspired St. John or St. Paul, or a doctor like St. Athanasius, St. Augustine, or St. Thomas, they still find the stupendous mysteries receding from their sight into the regions of eternity. And nothing is left but to exclaim with St. Paul: "Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and of the knowledge of God! How incomprehensible are His judgements, and how unsearchable His ways?" What sublimer proof can we have of the presence of God in man, and of man in God, than His familiar presence with the humblest child of faith, whilst of unsearchable majesty and truth to the most illuminated souls?

But all the works of God in creation are progressive. Decreed before the foundation of the world, and promised after the fall, the Divine Incarnation was delayed until man was prepared for its reception. He had first to learn his own weakness, his proneness to error, his helplessness and misery without the grace of God. Death came, and corruption grew; and iniquity was bred from iniquity until it exceeded all measure. Men stopped at no evil, but added new inventions of crime and idolatry to the old, until human nature became insatiable of sin. Death

more and more prevailed, and corruption obtained a power that was ever on the increase. The greater part of mankind became so infected with the earthly and carnal life as to lose all sight of what is spiritual, so that few men could lift their minds above the visible and material heavens. They placed their fictitious gods, the creatures of their imagination, in the sky, on the mountain tops, in the woods and brooks, beneath the earth, in the sea, and by their domestic hearth. The law of death reigned everywhere among the Gentiles, and even among the chosen and prophetic race, as St. Paul shows; and through the weakness of human nature, the law of life became to many of them a law of death. The human race was perishing in soul, perishing even in bodily corruption at the great centres of civilization. Satan seemed to be gaining his whole cause, and only seemed to require time to gain possession of the whole human race. Of what profit would it have been to continue mankind, or the world devoted to the service of man? Both man and the world would have failed from their final end.

But, on the other hand, to quote St. Athanasius, whom we shall chiefly follow in our further exposition, it would be less than becoming for creatures endowed with reason, and partakers by that reason of the Word of God, to be suffered to perish altogether. It would be beneath the Divine Goodness to suffer creatures made by God to be totally destroyed, and for no other reason than that the devil had circumvented man by craftiness. Was the divine art which God had exhibited in man to come to nothing, because he was thoughtless and the devil crafty? Was the good God to suffer corruption to prevail over His perishing creatures? Was He to leave death to tyrannize over them? For what end were they made? Better had they never been made, than that the whole race should perish utterly. God therefore consulted his own divine goodness, and entered upon the work of mercy.

But in His justice God had proclaimed the law of death from the beginning, against transgression and the sin of apostasy from His law. And having proclaimed the law, it must be fulfilled. Accordingly St. Paul tells us "that death reigned from Adam until Moses, even over them who had not sinned after the similitude of the transgression of Adam, who was a figure of Him who was to come." Then came the law to one people, revealing the death

of sin, but doing nothing to remove it; filled with the promise, but accomplishing nothing, except to raise up faith and hope in the promise not yet fulfilled. Death must reign over man for a certain time, or God would not be truthful in threatening death. But is His work to perish? He did not create us for ourselves, for that would be our misery. He did not create us to be independent of Him, for that would be our destruction. He suffered us to fall, that we might find out our native nothingness; and that, finding out what we are without His grace, we might learn to know that without Him we are poor, naked, blind, and miserable.

Satan appeared to succeed, but God has His great work in view, and has already prepared that intervention whereby He will exhibit His wisdom and goodness by drawing the greatest good out of the greatest evil. The device of the tempter is allowed to work, that after man has been humiliated to the very root of his nature, and has experienced all his weakness, the longing might revive in him for that good which the world cannot give; and that from the bitter taste of himself and of this deceptive world his very discontent with himself may dispose him for better things. For the image of God was yet in him, however much obscured, the appetite for the greater good was not extinct, but had lost its sway; conscience, however dimmed, was not dead; and the sense of God's presence had not abandoned him so far, but that in solemn moments he forgot his false gods, and called upon the one true God.

What shall God do? He might strike men with repentance as He did the Ninevites, but repentance alone can only restrain man from evil for the time; it could not change his inward condition; it could not draw out the root of corruption; it could not restore the Divine likeness, except through the restorative power of the Word of God, who made all things from nothing. He alone could change corruption into incorruption; He alone could give the gifts which recover men to the friendship of God. He alone could enlighten the blind and heal the wounded unto death, and was alone worthy to intercede through His sufferings and death for our deliverance.

To accomplish this sublime work of restoration, the Son of God, who is never distant from His creatures, but with His Father fills all things with His presence, came into this carnal and corruptible world; came with the utmost benignity, and showed Himself

openly. He saw how the sentence of death passed on human transgression had gathered force from every human corruption, and how that sentence could not be removed until it had been fulfilled. He beheld how the malice of men had grown out of all measure, and how it was working with ever-increasing vehemence to the destruction of humanity, until it could be no longer tolerated. He beheld all men guilty of death, and without a way of deliverance. Moved at the spectacle, and enduring no longer that Death should hold his reign over humanity without limit or restraint, He resolved that what He had made and enlightened with reason should not perish, and was unwilling longer to permit the great design of His Father in forming man to be in vain. He therefore took a body like to ours; in taking that body to Himself, it was not His only object to be seen and heard by men, who were become too gross to behold Him spiritually, or He would have taken a more excellent body; but he took a body like ours, and of the same stock, although He did not take it after our manner. He took that body from an Immaculate Virgin, not through the intervention of man, but through the power of the Holy Ghost; and He made that body an instrument for His service, in which He might dwell, through which He might make Himself known, by which He might claim kindred with us, with which He might offer an acceptable sacrifice to His Father for His brethren.

He received that body animated with a soul like ours, that He might be in all things perfect man. And in the act of its creation that humanity was united, not indeed to the nature of God, but to the person of the Eternal Word, so that His human nature was and is the very humanity of the Son of God. His body He delivered to death, and with a supreme kindliness gave His life to the Father for all men whom He had made His brethren; that the law of death might expend its force upon Him, and so be dissolved in all men who die to themselves in Him; and that henceforth this law of death might have no more force over those who are made like to Him. He also offered His body—the body, remember, of the Son of God—that through the power and virtue dwelling in that body, and the grace of the resurrection from the dead, He might restore our bodies after they are gone to corruption, and might recall them from death to life, destroying death utterly, as the stubble is destroyed by fire.

Where the sovereign reigns in grace and power, there is order, peace, and security from hostile foes. But the great evil that had befallen the kingdom of this world was the alienation of its Sovereign Lord and Master from His subjects, through their own perversity, which left them a prey to death and Satan. When, therefore, the Lord of life turned once more in mercy to the world, and took up His dwelling with us in our nature, the hostile powers were checked, and turned back at His presence; death was encountered by life, and eternal peace restored.

What can be imagined more worthy the divine goodness than this sublime conduct of the Son of God? How infinite His condescension to His fallen creatures? What a mighty antagonist to the spirit of evil is the Lord of life! He makes Himself a member of the human race to expel the evils which have taken possession of His brethren. By His teaching He corrects their ignorance: by His virtue and power He restores all that they have lost to them. All this is confirmed by the inspired words of St. Paul, who tells us: "The charity of Christ presseth us; judging this, that if one died for all, then all were dead. And Christ died for all; that they also who live, may not now live to themselves, but unto Him who died for them, and rose again. . . . . If then any be in Christ a new creature, the old things are passed away, behold all things are made new. But all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to Himself in Christ, and hath given to us the ministry of reconciliation." Then the Apostle in another epistle gives us the reason why the Son of God, and not another, should be our redemption and salvation. "But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the sufferings of death crowned with glory and honour; that through the grace of God He might taste death for all. For it became Him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, who had brought many children into glory, to perfect the author of their salvation, by His passion. For both He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one. For which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." After this the Apostle proceeds to show why the Word of God should take our nature to secure our redemption: "Therefore because the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner hath been partaker of the same: that through death He might destroy him who had the empire of death, that is to say, the devil: and

might deliver them who through the fear of death were all their lifetime subject to servitude."

Of what use is our existence unless we can obtain the object of our existence? If we cannot come to the knowledge of God, for whom we were created, our life is empty and vain. How can we be the full partakers of reason, unless we know the Word of the Father who is the reason of God, of whose reason we are made partakers? If, ignorant of Him, we use our reason upon nothing but earthly things, we bring ourselves down with our reason to the level of the animal creation. But God made us partakers of His own image, of the Eternal Word of His reason, to lift us in mind and heart above this earth. By the wealth of this gift He made us capable of receiving the Word of God, the perfect image of the Father, into our soul, that through that image of the Father we might know the Father. For "no one hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him."

A gift such as the image of God in our soul, ought to have been sufficient of itself to keep us in the knowledge of God, since it is an implanted reflection of His own Eternal Word. But against the neglect of that self-knowledge which brings us to the knowledge of God, God provided for us another and an external way of knowing Him in His works. And even against the neglect of that evidence, in which the Eternal Word speaks to us from every side, He provided another and a more human way of bringing us to know Him. The Divine Word spoke through His prophets, whom He clothed with sanctity and power. And although the prophets were sent directly to the sons of Israel, who rejected and persecuted them, they were not sent to them alone, but to leave their teaching for a light to the world at large, both as regards the knowledge of God and the conduct of life.

But if men neither recognized God through the reflection of His image within them; nor through His law written in their conscience; nor in the works created through His Eternal Word, however many and various, with which He surrounded them; nor in that conduct of His providence in which, through His creative Word, He upholds and moves all things, and guides them to man's service; nor in the Word of God speaking His truth, wisdom and will through His prophets; if, despite of all these manifestations of the benignity and humanity of God, the race of man is still conquered and

subdued by the present delights of the world and the flesh, and by the delusions and seductions of demons, worshipped and obeyed in place of God; if, so far from opening their eyes to the truth, they only sink deeper and deeper into blindness, vice, and crime; until they seem no longer to possess their natural reason; what does this prove, but that they stand in absolute need of an internal renovation of that likeness to God in which they were created, and of a restoration of that likeness to God which it is beyond the power of any creature to effect.

The Word of God Himself came, therefore, into the world, that, as the very image of the Father, He might repair the image of God in man, and restore to him the likeness of God. No mere man could do this, because He is only made to the image of God. No angel could do this, because he is not the image of the Father. No one could do this but He who is the one sole image of the Father; and as this could not be done unless death and corruption be first destroyed, He took human nature with which first to destroy death and sin, and then to restore man to God's image and likeness. If a great artist makes a good likeness of some great personage on a valuable material, and that likeness becomes defaced, it cannot be renewed on that same material unless both the person whose likeness it was, and the artist who made the likeness, be again present to recover the likeness. The material in this case is the human soul, the original of the likeness is the Word of God, the express image of the Father, and the artist is the same Word of God who formed the likeness in the beginning. If, then, man is to be restored, the Son of God must first remove the damage, and then restore the likeness. As the Gospel says: "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

Who, again, could have effected this restoration but He who knows what is in the mind and soul of man? Who but He who moveth all things, and through their movement makes the Father known? He says of this Himself: "All things are delivered to Me by My Father. And no one knoweth who the Son is but the Father, and who the Father is but the Son, and they to whom the Son shall reveal Him." But this revelation is made through all the works of the Word of God. Therefore, as men had ceased to look up to Heaven; as they looked but to earthly and human things, or to the similitudes of earthly and human things, the Son

of God took a human soul and body, that through visible works done in the body men might know the Son of God, and through the Son the Father also. Having lost the sight and sense of Divine wisdom in its spiritual purity, that wisdom came to men as a man, and with all the infirmities of man, yet in the person and power of God, that they who had lost the Divine sense of wisdom might be brought back to that wisdom through their human sympathies. This is what St. Paul says: "Seeing that in the wisdom of God, the world through wisdom knew not God; it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believed."

As a man among men, the Word of God took hold of men by their senses, that they who put their senses foremost, and judge of all things chiefly through their senses, might be led back through those very senses of the body to the word of truth. If they looked with admiring eyes on the visible creation, they saw that very creation confessing its Lord and Maker, and obeying His commands. For our Saviour wrought such miracles in nature as no man had ever done, and wrought them as the Son of God and Master of all things. If men were devoted to evil spirits, they saw Him expel those spirits from the possession of men, and might know by His command of them that the demons are not gods. If they gave themselves to superstitious worship of the dead, they saw Him rising from the dead, and exhibiting His mastery of death.

But the Son of God came for a yet greater work than to remove our errors, or even to expel our sins. He exhibits to us His Divine character and His sublimer work where he says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." He is the way through which we pass to God, and He gives us His truth and life that we may pass to God. That, as St. Paul has told us, "Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts, that being rooted and founded in charity, you may be able to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length, and height and depth, to know also the charity of Christ, which surpasseth all knowledge, that you may be filled unto all the fulness of God."

Let no one imagine that the Son of God is enclosed in His body so as not to be elsewhere. He was not so engaged in the work done in the body as to leave the universe without His creative support and His active providence. For the Word contains

all things, but is contained by none. Whilst He is in all things by His action and influence, in His own Divine nature He is above all things. His power is in all, He administers all, and expands His providence over all, and gives light to all who have light, and life to all who have life; but He wholly exists in His Father alone. The human soul must still abide with the body whilst it contemplates things at a distance. We contemplate the heavenly bodies, for example, and watch their movements, although confined to the body, and unable to influence or move what we contemplate. But it was in no such way that the Son of God was in His body. He was in the body, and in all things, and was at the same time exterior to all things, and reposed in the Father alone. Contemplate, then, this unbounded mystery of the Eternal Word in all its length and breadth, and height and depth; how He who acted as man is in the person of God; how, as the Word of the Father, He gave light and life to all; and how, as the Son, He was always with the Father.

His human nature was framed by the Holy Ghost in the Virgin Mary, and that virginal body of the mother of God suffered nothing at His birth, nor was defiled, but made more holy by the mystery. And although, as the Word of God, He is present in all things, He partakes not of them, but all things live and are fostered by His influence. For as the sun which He created and placed in the heavens gives its light and quickening influence to the earth, yet is neither defiled nor obscured by earthly things, whilst it enlightens and purifies whatever is on the earth, much more did the most Holy Word of God make Himself known in the body without being defiled by the body; but, free from all corruption, He gave life and purity to the body. "Who did no sin, neither was guile found in His mouth." Yet He was born, and suffered as a man, and died, that there might be every kind of proof that He was man as well as God.

He did not offer Himself, therefore, at once to death, upon His coming, but first exhibited His human life, and spoke His divine word, and manifested His divine works, that when He came to His sacrifice He might be known to be the Son of God. And when the Jews treated Him as a man, but refused to accept Him as the Son of God, He said to them: "If I do not the works of my Father, believe me not. But if I do, though you will not believe me, believe the works: that ye may know and believe that the

Father is in me, and I in the Father." Who that saw Him change water into wine could doubt that He was Lord of both? Who that saw Him walk on the sea as on the land, and still the angry storm by command, could question His dominion over the elements? Who that saw Him feed the hungry multitudes with a small quantity of bread, and beheld with astonishment the quantity remaining, could mistake Him for any other than the Lord of that providence which provides for all things? Who that beheld Him healing the sick with a word, curing the blind and maimed with a touch, or raising up the dead with a command, could doubt His being the Lord and Master of life and death?

Thus far, from where we gave note of it, we have chiefly followed the exposition of St. Athanasius.* Let us now turn back for a moment to the state of the world when Christ appeared to bring it back to God. We have observed in a former lecture that three fundamental principles were to be found at the root of all ancient religions, and that under all the accumulations of error, idolatry and superstition, they were still perceptible when the Son of God came into the world. The first is, that man had fallen from an original state of light and happiness. The second, that he stands in need of a divine deliverer. The third, that his deliverance from evil must come through a substituted sacrifice. But there is a fourth principle which equally shines, like an original truth corrupted, through all the heathen deifications, poetries, and mythologies, and that is the belief that human nature is capable of union with a divine personality. The pagans erred not in the possibility of such a union, but in their gross misapplication of it to their imaginary gods, whom they both deified and humanized.

But the true nature of a Divine Incarnation could not enter the mind of man without the revelation of God. Yet so familiar was the heathen mind with the general idea of a personal union of divinity with humanity, that when the Incarnation of the Son of God was preached to them, it was not this union of God with man that shocked and startled them, so much as the humiliation and sufferings of the Son of God, until prepared by grace to receive the truth. We have full evidence of this, both in the controversies which the pagans held with the Christian Fathers, and in the examinations of the Martyrs before the pagan tribunals. Even the

* S. Athanas. *De Incarnatione Verbi*, per totum.

pantheistic systems of Asia, dark as they were and are, through the loss of distinction between God and His creation, and abounding as they do with metaphysical monstrosities and the wildest legends, are but gross corruptions of the older belief in the unity of God and of a promised union of God with man. In their dreamy reveries they confound the universal light with universal substance, and the material world with the illusions of the imagination; yet through all their reveries of gods and incarnations of gods we discern a certain imperfect notion of a true God, and of a deliverance of man through an incarnation of God.

There are deeper things in the human soul than the natural man can reach or understand. Created rational by the Word of God, the light of reason is implanted by the Eternal Word, and that upon a divine exemplar present in the Eternal Word. "All things were made by Him, and without Him was made nothing that was made." And again St. John says: "In Him was life, and the life was the light of men; and the light shineth in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." There were consequently lights and aspirations even in the souls of the better heathens, of the cause of which they were ignorant, but which through all their obscurations looked towards the Eternal Word, of whom they were ignorant. For deeper than his errors, deeper than his opinions, deeper than his mythologies, is the light of man's reason, an image of the eternal reason, an image of the Trinity. In searching, therefore, more profoundly into the soul, such men as Parmenides, Socrates, and Plato found the testimony of one only God, and of one Word of God, the enlightener of man.

In short the great mysteries of the Trinity and the Incarnation are found to agree with what was previously in the soul, whilst the entrance of the light of faith expels every false religion as disagreeing with what already exists more profoundly in the soul. This fact was noted by St. Chrysostom in his wide experience of pagan converts. "The pagans," he says, "incur no dangers so long as they keep to their old institutions and customs; but when they abandon them for ours they expose themselves to great dangers. Had they found what they had been brought up in, for so many ages, to be more accordant with their reason than our doctrines are, they would never have abandoned them, especially as this change exposed them to the greatest perils. But when they found out that what they had been

brought up in was mischievous in the very nature of things, they gave up their old customs even though death stood in the way; and they took refuge in the things of Christ, because they found them to be in accordance with their nature, whilst their old customs were contrary to their nature."*

The image of God was oppressed by error, and craved, and still craves, for deliverance from evil, and for restoration to congenial light. "For the expectation of the creature," says St. Paul, "waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him that made it subject in hope: because the creature shall be delivered from the servitude of corruption, unto the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

To ascend to higher truth than we have yet contemplated in the divine mystery of the Incarnation; as it is the nature of good to communicate good, so it is the nature of the Supreme Good to communicate good in every way in which it can be received. That Divine Being whose nature is goodness, and whose goodness is infinite, must be expected to communicate His goodness in every possible way in which the creature is able to receive His good, whether the good of light, of grace, of justice, or that good which He is. He gives us all things, and with them the truth that lights us to Himself as the end of all things. As the first cause He has produced through His Word a most wonderful procession of creatures, one ascending above another in excellence, each capable of greater good, until the grand procession ends in man, with God Himself for his final good. But is there any higher order of creation imaginable, and therefore possible? Is there such a creation possible, that it shall resume the creation already existing in a nobler way, and shall unite the whole in one grand summary with God?

From the perfect artist we look for some unrivalled work of superabounding excellence, embracing the whole creative power of the artist, and revealing the whole motive of his mind. But God works not, like human artists, with material appliances upon models already existing in nature. He has the forms of all creatable things everlastingly before Him in His Eternal World, and works with power, wisdom, justice and goodness; and to His divine art we have no access until He reveals it in His work.

* S. J. Chrysost. *Hom.* 7, *in Epist.* 1, *ad Cor.*

But this new and surpassing work He has both produced and revealed. For as the first man came of nothingness, and had no inalienable union with God, he failed from natural weakness, and fell from God in the false exercise of his freedom, and his whole posterity with him. What, then, is to become of all that divine good which was destined for the human race? And how can God allow Himself to be defrauded of the end of His work in this world? He puts forth the masterpiece of His divine art and wisdom: He creates a new man united with the divine person of His Eternal Word, and makes the union of man with God eternally secure. As all evil has come to mankind through human generation from Adam, He establishes a new and most pure principle of generation by grace in this new and divine Adam; that being transferred from the stock of the sinful Adam, men might be regenerated in Him, as the true Head and Father of the human race. And as He unites in Himself all things heavenly and earthly in their purity, He is destined to renew all things, and to be the fountain of pardon, grace and benediction to all who accept His redemption and salvation.

The person of the Father is incommunicable, because He is the first principle of all things. But the person of the Word is communicable, not by ceasing to be what He eternally is, but by assuming to Himself what by nature He is not. Yet even in this mystery God is always God, and the creature is always the creature. There is no mixture or confusion of the two natures of God and man; but the principle of their union is the divine person of the Word. St. Thomas has explained why the Divine Word should become man, rather than either of the other persons of the Holy Trinity in words as profound as they are clear. He says: "The Divine Word hath not only a rational nature, but He hath a certain affinity of reason with all creatures whatsoever. As an artist has a conception of reason in his mind for whatever he produces, so the Divine Word containeth in Himself the reasons of all God's creatures. Wherefore as the creations of God are but a certain realization and representation of things that are embraced in the conception of the Divine Word, all things are said to be created through the Eternal Word. And from the consideration of this truth we can more readily understand how it became the Divine Word to enter into personal unity with the creature in human nature."*

* S. Thoma, *Sum. contra Gent.* L. 4, c. 42.

All that is required for a work so great and wonderful is a motive worthy of God. But what motive can be more worthy than to secure the final end of His rational creation? What motive more worthy than to give a new head and new life to His intelligent creatures? What motive more worthy than to destroy sin and death? What motive more worthy than to bring back truth and grace to the inhabitants of this earth? What motive can be more worthy of God than to restore to humanity that lost humility by which man may be once more subject to God? What motive can be more worthy of the divine goodness than to redeem His sinful creatures, and restore them to the friendship of their Creator? What motive can be more worthy of God than to restore the light of divine truth to countless intelligences, the power of grace to their enfeebled wills, and the divine communion to their souls? External to His essential glory, what can be so glorious to God as this creation of such a new creature in the person of His Son, that, though in form like the old, yet in virtue he is filled with all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, that through Him all things may be renewed in Heaven and on earth? What can be more glorious to God than to compass Heaven and earth in a work of such surpassing power and excellence as to benefit all men and angels, and to crown His creation with inexhaustible mercy and goodness? "The Incarnation," says St. Augustine, "is the supreme example of the grace of God; it is impossible for grace to be more graciously commended to us than in the Son of God clothed with our humanity." "He made of Himself a stepping," says St. Leo, "that through His humanity we might ascend to His divinity."

Through the mystery of the Incarnation the whole work of God is brought back to its first principle. As in the soul of Christ the spiritual creation is summed up in perfection, and as in the body of Christ the material creation is summed up in perfection, and as this one example of perfect humanity has no other person than the Eternal Word, and the Eternal Word is one with the Blessed Trinity, all the elements of creation, recapitulated in one perfect man, return as by a circle of life to the First Principle of all things. As Christ has purchased mankind with His blood, and through His blood, filled with His spirit, He regenerates every man of goodwill to Himself; so the regenerate are concorporated with Him, and return through Christ to God. "As in Adam all die,"

says St. Paul, "so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But every one in his order; the first fruits Christ, then they who are in Christ, who have believed in His coming. Afterwards the end, when He shall have delivered up the kingdom to God and the Father. . . . And when all things shall be subdued to Him; then the Son also himself shall be subjected unto Him that put all things under His feet, that God may be all in all."

To consider the nature of the union of God with man in Christ, there is no human person in Christ, but only a divine person, the person of the Son of God. Yet there are two natures in Christ, the divine and the human nature, which two natures are ever distinct from each other. As the soul and body is one man, so God and man is one Christ. As the body of man is united with his soul in one person, whilst the two substances are distinct, so the humanity of Christ is united with His divinity in one person, whilst His two natures are distinct. As the body of man is the living instrument of his soul to do his will; so the humanity of Christ is the living instrument of His divine person to do His will.* Yet there are two wills in Christ, the human will and the divine will, for each nature has its own will, although His human will was ever obedient to His divine will.

St. Paul has used very remarkable terms to express the hypostatic union of the humanity of Christ with His divinity. "In Him," he says, "it hath well pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell." Again, he says: "In whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." And using a yet more definite expression, he says: "In whom the whole fulness of the Godhead dwelt bodily." That is to say, the Godhead dwells in the humanity of Christ, not accidentally, not by mere operation, or by grace alone, but really and substantially. There are two bonds of this substantial union, the spiritual bond by which the soul of Christ is in substantial union with the Godhead, and the corporal bond by which the body of Christ is substantially united with the Godhead. And hence, although the body and soul of Christ were separated from each other in His death, each was still united with His divinity. Hence St. John says that "the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us."

Having considered the height of this master-work of God, as it ascends even to the bosom of the Father; let us consider its depth

* S. Thoma, *Sum. contra Gent.* L. 4, c. 41.

for a moment, as it descends even to the abyss of human weakness. St. Peter tells us how the angels longed to look down into the depths of this amazing descent. "That the Almighty nature should descend into our humble condition," says St. Gregory of Nyssa, "is the revelation of a power incomparably greater than all miracles, however stupendous, however high above the order of nature. When God puts His power forth to do some great and exalted work, we at once admit that it accords with His nature. But when He descends to what is low and abject, He reveals to us a most singular and overabounding power, yet a power that meets with no hindrance, because the things done are above nature."* Whatever work God undertakes, He destroys the impossible. He wills, and nature yields to His will.

"It was no reproach to Him," says St. John Chrysostom, "that He bore His own work upon Him, and made that work His clothing, thereby conferring a great glory on that work. Even the first man was not made until the clay came into His divine hands; and such a corruptible vessel cannot be transformed until it becomes the clothing of the Divine Workman."†

In taking our human nature the Son of God became our mediator and redeemer. "There is one God, and one mediator of God and man, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself a redemption for all, a testimony in due time." That He might execute this office, He received from His Father the eternal priesthood. Concerning which priesthood St. Paul quotes the solemn words of prophecy, showing it to have been already accomplished in the eternal decrees. He says: "So Christ also did not glory in Himself that He might be a high priest: but He that said to Him: Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten Thee. As He saith in another place: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchisedec." Now Melchisedec was both king and high priest, his origin is left in mystery, and he offered a sacrifice that differed from that of the Law. To him, as priest of the most High God, Abraham made offerings in the hour of victory, and in him all who are the children of Abraham. The priesthood of Christ is therefore a different priesthood from that of Aaron, which was but figurative, representative and expectant of the priesthood of Christ. But from the priesthood of Christ all

* S. Greg. Nyssa, *Orat. Catachet.* c. 24.

† S. J. Chrysost. *Hom. in Natal. Christi.*

priesthood before His time and all priesthood after His time obtains its power and derives its efficacy.

What is the nature of this priesthood? St. Paul will tell us: "Every high priest taken from among men, is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that he may offer gifts and sacrifices for sin: who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and err; because he also is encompassed with infirmity." To adopt the clear definition of St. Isidore of Pelusium: "Priesthood is the mediation between human and divine nature, worshipping the divine nature and working a change in human nature." The priesthood of Christ is in His human nature, although it receives its dignity and power from His divine person. For which reason St. Paul says that "every high priest is taken from among men;" and that "there is one mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus." Hence St. Athanasius says that "the Word, who is the Creator, was made a high priest when He put on a created body."* The priesthood of Christ is therefore exercised in His human nature although in His Divine person. "For," says St. Paul, "it was fitting that we should have such a high priest, holy, innocent, undefiled, separated from sinners, and made higher than the heavens: who needed not daily, as the other priests, to offer sacrifices first for His own sin, and then for the people's: for this He did once, in offering Himself."

The Son of God is not only the high priest offering, but the victim offered; "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sins of the world." He differs from all other priests, in that whilst they offer another victim for their sins, He offers Himself as the one sinless victim for all sin. This also St. Paul reads in the eternal decrees, as revealed through the prophets of old. "It is impossible," he says, "that with the blood of oxen and goats sins should be taken away. Wherefore when He cometh into the world He saith: Sacrifice and oblation Thou wouldest not: but Thou hast fitted a body to me: holocausts for sin did not please Thee. Then said I: Behold I come: in the head of the book it is written of me: That I should do Thy will, O God. . . . . Then said I: Behold I come to do Thy will, O God. . . . . In the which will, we are sanctified by the oblation of the body of Jesus Christ once."

* S. Athanas. *Orat.* 2, *Contra Arianos.* See also Petavius, *De Incarnat* L. 12. c. 11.

The Priest and victim are one, because the innocent offered Himself for the guilty. They are one, because when in His infinite mercy God decreed the justification of the unjust, the atonement for sin could only be made by one who is perfectly just, and who has the dignity of God to repair the indignities offered to God. He therefore gave up His human nature to humiliations, sorrows, sufferings, and crucifixion upon the altar of the Cross, that by the destruction of our mortal nature in Him, He might find immortal life both for Himself and us; and might show to us, that by suffering with Him, and dying with Him to our old and corrupted nature, we might rise in Him to a new life. The Priest and the victim are one, because the sacrifice is a free offering of obedience unto death, to atone for all human disobedience. The high priest and victim is man, that He may stand in the place of His brethren, whose sins He expiates; He is also God, that He may give an infinite value to the sacrifice. He entered the household of humanity that He might repair what He had built. This truth St. Paul puts forward with all the breadth of his inspired mind. "Consider," he says, "the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus, who is faithful to Him that made Him, as was Moses in all his house. For this man was accounted worthy of greater glory than Moses, by so much more as He that built the house hath greater honour than the house, for every house is built by some man. But He that created all things is God. And Moses, indeed, was faithful in all his house as a servant, for a testimony of those things that were to be said: but Christ as the Son in His own house: which house are we, if we hold fast in confidence and hope to the end." The builder of the house of humanity came into His own house, found it ruined and defiled, and purified and restored it at His own great cost and sacrifice. And so St. Paul concludes: "Having therefore a great high priest that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. For we have not a high priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities; but one tempted in all things like as we are, without sin."

The intrinsic character of that human sin for which Christ offered himself a victim, consists of two forms of egotism, inordinate self-love, or pride. The one is the pride of the soul, that swells against God, and prefers our own light to the light of God, our own will to the will of God, and our own way to the way of God. The other is

that pride of the flesh which prompts the pride of the heart, and swells in sensual and self-indulgence ; fills us with delusion, and stimulates us to a gross and lawless love of self in preference to the love of God. Hence the Scriptures tell us, that pride is the root of all evil, and that all evil takes its beginning from pride. If the Scriptures also tell us that covetousness is the root of all evil, it means that avarice which draws all things covetable to the fostering of our self-love and pride, rather than to employ them in the service of their Divine Author. The proud man covets all things to himself, making himself the end of the creature in place of God, which is consummate pride.

But Christ saw human nature with the eyes of God, and saw that to heal the egotism of that corrupted nature demanded sacrifice, which is the direct and proper remedy for self-love. From His birth to His death, He took the way opposed to self-love, pride, sensuality, and every kind of egotism. In the fire of suffering He made himself a holocaust, sacrificing every human inclination to obedience to His Father's will. Coming to destroy the evil of self-love, He said : "I came not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me." And again : "I do nothing of myself, but what I see my Father doing, that do I." He showed us the wonderful strength and freedom of will that results from obedience. He not only obeyed His Father's will as it was internally made known, but as it was externally manifested, even in those human instruments that were in themselves evil, and who by their pride and cruelty subjected Him to ignominy and torments. His maligners, judges, and executioners represented the malice contained in the whole sinfulness of human nature, in its war against God ; and he suffered from sinful men for the love of sinful men ; so that we may ever say, with too much truth, that by our sins we have crucified the Son of God. He atones for the excess of our pride with the excess of humility ; and for the excess of our disobedience with the excess of His obedience ; and the world beholds the astonishing spectacle of God in man enduring all ignominy with divine patience, and sounding all the depths of abasement. He atones for the sins of our souls with the agonies of His own, and for the sins of our bodies with sufferings unspeakable, that began with His birth and were consummated in His death. "Being in the form of God, He thought it no robbery to be equal with God : but emptied Himself, taking

the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of man, and in habit formed as a man. He humbled Himself, becoming obedient unto death, even to the death of the Cross."

But, as St. Paul says: "God was indeed in Christ, reconciling the world to Himself." Having redeemed us with His blood, that blood, filled with His spirit and life, obtained a virtue to purify all men, and to restore them to justice. Rising from the dead and ascending on high, He carried His blood through the veil into the sanctuary of Heaven, where He sits at the right hand of God, making perpetual intercession for us. For "being consummated, He became to all who obey Him the cause of eternal salvation."

Our Saviour has taught us in the whole example of His life and death, that as our fall and degradation comes of descending from the love of God to the love of self, which can do nothing for us; our re-ascent to God comes of sacrificing our love of self to the love of God, which does all things for us. And this He has taught us by word as well as by example. "He said to all: If any one will come after me, let him deny himself; and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it; but he that shall lose his life for my sake, shall find it."

To sum up this discourse, and bring its lines to one point, Christ is the head, the summing up, and the restoration of all things. If we listen to St. Irenæus, that disciple of the apostolic men will express this truth for us in vigorous terms. "One," he says, "Christ Jesus our Lord, comes in virtue of a universal plan, and sums up all things in Himself, as He is made both invisible and visible. . . . Being both the Word and man, he recapitulates all that is heavenly, spiritual, and invisible; and hath likewise the princedom of things visible and corporal. Taking to himself the primacy, and setting forth himself as the Head of the Church, He draws all things to Himself in their due time."* St. Paul has portrayed this universal plan which God contemplated, and which the Eternal Word has executed through His incarnation, from its beginning to its final consummation, in a passage of unrivalled magnificence. "Giving thanks," he says, "to God and the Father, who hath made us worthy to be partakers of the lot of the saints in light, who hath delivered us from the power

* S. Irenæus. *Advers. Hæres.* L. 3. c. 18.

of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His beloved Son. In whom we have redemption through His blood, the remission of sins; who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature; for in Him were all things created in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and in Him: and He is before all, and by Him all things consist; and He is the head of the body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first born from the dead: that in all things He may hold the primacy. Because in Him it hath well-pleased the Father that all fulness should dwell: and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, making peace through the blood of the Cross, both as to the things on earth and the things that are in Heaven."

LECTURE XIII.

THE REGENERATION OF MAN.

"Who hath regenerated us unto a living hope."—1 Peter i. 3.

THERE is no race of angels; each one of them is a distinct and separate creation. The substance of their nature is spiritual, without the vesture of a body; they are pure intelligences, with free and unceasing activity that requires no repose. They live by grace, and minister to the will of God. Of a nobler creation than man, their nature is more simple and pure, their intelligence more luminous, their fervour more ardent, as their love is without division, their response to the Divine Will more prompt, and their action more vigorous and steadfast. Having entered, after trial, into their beatitude, their spirits are as pure mirrors in receiving and reflecting the eternal truth, and their being is most beautiful and radiant with the light and ardour of the vision of God. They form a celestial hierarchy of many orders and degrees of excellence, according to the dignity of each one's creation, and the character and greatness of his gifts. Among those myriads of spirits each one has his position, office, dignity and glory; and as all are filled with happiness to the brim of capacity, there is neither rivalry nor jealousy, but the happiness of all augments the content of each through their mutual love in God. The higher have a divine ministry to the lower orders, the greater lights illuminating the lesser lights, and the greater powers giving strength to the lesser powers, God operating all in all. In numbers innumerable those blessed spirits hold to their order, and are communicative of their gifts, and praise the Divine Author of their blessedness without ceasing. But as God never repeats Himself in His works, but makes up

in diversity what is wanting in infinity, and as the angels are not multiplied like men by generation, each angel is not only a separate creation, but a separate species.

As compared with the angelic creation, the most wonderful thing in human nature is that corporate unity of all men in one species which results from the generation of all men from one. As the whole tree and all its branches are virtually contained in the root, the whole race of mankind was virtually contained in Adam. The very terms *mankind* and *the human race*, which have their representatives in all languages, express this unity of the human species. To the angelic intelligences this plan of human creation must have appeared most wonderful, especially when they beheld that to each individual body, as it came into existence, a separate spiritual soul was created.

In providing for the propagation of the human race from one, the Almighty contemplated the corporate unity of the human race for reasons most profound. This corporate unity of mankind is the cause of many virtues which otherwise could not exist. In that unity God laid the deep foundations of the family life, with its beautiful subordination, in the authority of parents and the obedience of children, which trains them for obedience to God. In the creation of the sexes, the wisdom of God provided for a high moral union to perfect the corporal unity of mankind. He took woman from man, and then reunited them in the divine institution of marriage. He gave to man the stronger mind and greater force, to be the guide, support, and protection of the woman. He gave to woman the stronger heart, and finer sensibility, tenderness and patience, to be the consolation of man. The man protects the woman, the woman gives her piety to the man. Each sex, again, exercises its special influence in the forming of their offspring. The man represents the authority, the woman the love of God; the one enfolds the child's heart with her affections, the other rules its waywardness with fear. Each is the complement of the other, and when their union is formed in God according to His Divine institution, that union is the completion of humanity in all its attributes and qualities. The government of the household by the father, when he governs by the law of God, is an image of God's paternal government; and the obedience of the family, in the fear and love of God, is an image of the service which is due to God from all humanity.

In the unity and brotherhood of mankind God has also provided for the social life and for the government of men, and for the social and political virtues which spring from that universal brotherhood. He who governs his brethren according to God's will and law is the servant of his brethren, as well as the servant of God; and they who obey him who governs for conscience sake, obey God, and yet are free in their obedience, as being of one blood, and therefore equal in the sight of God. In the corporate unity of the human race provision was also made for that virtue of kindliness from man to his fellow-man which is founded in our natural kinship, and for that thoughtfulness for each other which receives the beautiful name of humanity, as being founded in the community of mankind.

Although the bodies of men are multiplied and individualized through generation, the soul united to each body is not propagated, but is separately created to each body that is propagated. Hence our mother Eve spoke literally, as well as prophetically, when at the birth of her first-born she said: "I have conceived a man through God." For whilst the body of the child was born of Adam, the soul came to that body from the creative hand of God. It is this conciousness of giving birth to an immortal soul that fills the mind of every devout mother with awe and wonder when she brings forth her first-born into the world. So intimately, however, are the body and soul united in the composition of one person; so constant is the action and reaction of soul on body, and body on soul, that each imparts its condition to the other; so that the body of sin propagated from the fallen Adam imparts its culpability to the whole person of man. Unless, therefore, that culpability be eradicated by regeneration into a better humanity, it remains in the same condition.

But in constituting the human race in one common humanity, the Almighty Wisdom had yet higher objects in view. The incorporeal angels have no corporate union; their union is in the light and grace and glory of God, and their communion with each other is in the charity of God. But as men are created lower than the angels; as their spiritual being is united to a marvellous organization derived from the material substances of this world, to which their souls impart life, God created them in the unity of one blood, as a natural foundation for that unity of mind and heart which is the work of His gifts. Had all men remained in

grace and innocence, their common humanity would have provided a natural basis for the unity of their minds in one truth through one faith; and of the unity of their hearts in one hope, and one love of God, and of each other, for God's sake; as also for their unity in one common worship, adoring God, and giving Him thanks together. In short, God designed that all men should be of one mind in His Eternal Word of Truth, and of one spirit in His Holy Spirit, as they are of one body, through propagation from one common father of their race.

Such was the Divine plan. But—alas! how grievously has the unity of mankind been broken asunder. How perversely has that unity been thrown into disorder through the weakness of human wills, and through that perverted love of self that puts pride in the place of charity, and revolt in the place of obedience. This pride has not only separated man from God, but man from man, breaking up the concert of humanity, after it had lost its harmony with God, and throwing men into endless discords. The propagation of the sinful Adam is the propagation of humanity in self-division, in the warning of man against his conscience, and in divisions and contentions of brethren against brethren, that never cease to distract and afflict the great family of man.

In His all-present knowledge God foresaw those evils of division and dissension, as well as the other calamities of the human race, and he permitted them, that from their bitterness man might learn the misery of departing from God, and might find out from his weakness the need he has of God. Nothing more strikingly proves what rents and wounds have been made in human nature by its fall than those wars and contests between men of the same flesh and blood, despite of all the provision made in the economy of our nature for the unity of its members. Sin has not only brought division into each individual man, but that inward division has burst out into open divisions among the whole human family, divisions of mind, divisions of heart, divisions of nations, divisions of sects, and divisions of interests.

But God, who sees all things past, present, and to come in one ever present because eternal view, ordained the unity of the human family from one stock and blood, that it might profit in the end. The order of communicating grace provided for the angels would not have suited man; but God adopted the whole order of His grace for the whole order of our nature; and

took up this very principle of generation into the supernatural order, united it with the Divine man, and made it the principle of regeneration. He who by the Holy Spirit was born of the Virgin Mary in the person of the Son of God, became a new principle of generation, in whom all men have redemption, and from whom all receive the grace of redemption who are regenerated in Him. Through the union of His pure and sinless nature with the Eternal Word, filled with grace and life, and using the sacrament of baptism as the visible and assured means of His divine operation, the children born of Adam are born anew to Christ, upon which He takes possession of them with His sacred and atoning blood, takes away their injustice, and gives them His justice. Through this divine principle of regeneration, Christ propagates Himself; as the true Head and Regenerator of the human race, He excorporates us from the body of the old Adam, and incorporates us into His own body, making us the children of His blood and spirit.

Every Christian knows that he has received his evil from one man and his good from another. For there are but two men; there never were but two men; there never can be but two original men, the old Adam and the new Adam. The Apostle calls the first Adam "a figure of Him that is to come;" for as the old Adam was the first head and father of mankind, Christ is the second head and father of mankind. Adam became to his children the original source of injustice and death; Christ is to His children the source of justice and life. Adam is the principle head of disobedience; Christ the principal head of obedience. St. Paul draws the contrast between these two heads of the human race in the following terms: "The first Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam a quickening spirit. Yet that was not first which is spiritual but that which is natural; afterwards that which is spiritual. The first man was of the earth, earthly; the second man from Heaven, heavenly. Such as is the earthly, such also are the earthly; and such as is the heavenly, such also are they that are heavenly. Therefore, as we have borne the image of the earthly, let us also bear the image of the heavenly."

After showing that every man must bear either the earthly image of the earthly Adam or the heavenly image of the spiritual Adam, the Apostle contrasts the death of sin derived from Adam with the grace of life derived from Christ: "If by the offence of one many have died, much more the grace of God and the gift in

grace of one man Jesus Christ hath abounded unto many. . . . For if by one man's offence death reigned through one, much more they who receive abundance of grace, and of the gift, and of justice, shall reign in life through one, Jesus Christ. Therefore as by the offence of one, unto all men to condemnation : so also by the justice of one, unto all men to justification of life. For as by the disobedience of one man, many were made sinners ; so also by the obedience of one, many shall be made just."

After the contrast between the first and the second head and father of mankind, St. Paul brings in a chain of lucid comparisons to show how we are transferred from Adam to Christ ; how we are excorporated from the first man and incorporated with the second. As it would have profited us but little to be born of Adam if we had not been redeemed by Christ, so even the redemption of Christ would not have profited us unless that redemption were conveyed into us through our regeneration into His body. This regeneration is our second birth, of which Christ said to Nicodemus : "Amen, amen, I say to thee : except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God. Nicodemus saith to Him : How can a man be born again when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb, and be born again? Jesus answered : Amen, amen, I say to thee : except a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God. That which is born of flesh, is flesh ; and that which is born of spirit, is spirit."

The first argument of St. Paul in explanation of our transfer by regeneration from Adam to Christ is taken from the expressive signification of the act of baptism : "Unless a man be born again of water and the Holy Ghost, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven." Baptism is the burial of the man in the water and the raising him out of the water in which he was buried, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This burial in the water expresses the death of the man to the sinful Adam through the death of Christ ; whilst his rising again out of the water expresses the new life that he receives from Christ through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The action of the Holy Spirit Christ Himself explains in His continued words to Nicodemus : "Wonder not that I said to thee, you must be born again. The Spirit breatheth where He will, and thou hearest His voice, but thou knowest not whence He cometh and whither He goeth :

so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Again, the Apostle calls this regeneration a transplanting, because as the tree that is transplanted from one soil to another dies to the first and lives in the second where it is buried anew, so in his regeneration the man is transplanted from Adam to Christ. These are St. Paul's words: "How shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not that all we who are baptized in Christ Jesus are baptized in His death? For we are buried together with Him by baptism into death: that as Christ is risen from the dead by the glory of the Father, so we also may walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection. Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, and that we may serve sin no longer. For he that is dead is justified from sin. For if we be dead in Christ, we believe that we shall live also together with Christ. Knowing that Christ, rising again from the dead, dieth now no more, death shall no more have dominion over Him. For in that He died to sin, He died once; but in that He liveth, He liveth unto God. So do you also reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Again the Apostle compares the transfer of the regenerated from the body of Adam to the body of Christ to a second marriage after the first has been dissolved by death. Speaking of the law of Moses, a law which revealed sin, and provoked it, though it did nothing for its remission, he says: "The woman that hath a husband, whilst her husband liveth, is bound to the law. But if her husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. . . . . Therefore, my brethren, you also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that you may belong to another, who is risen again from the dead, that we may bring forth fruit to God."

In another place St. Paul compares the stock of Adam to the wild and unfruitful olive tree, and Christ to the good and fertile olive, and shows how in our regeneration we are taken as a branch from the one, and are engrafted in the other. Speaking to the converted Gentiles of the unconverted Jews, he says: "And they also, if they abide not in unbelief, shall be grafted in. For God is able to graft them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the wild olive

tree, which is natural to thee; and, contrary to nature, wert grafted into the good olive tree; how much more shall they, that are the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree." To show again, that from Christ as the root and stem, all the richness of His fruitful life flows into the engrafted branches, the Apostle says: "If the first fruit be holy, so is the lump also; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some of the branches be broken, and thou being a wild olive tree, art engrafted in them, and art made partaker of the root and of the fatness of the olive tree: boast not against the branches. But if thou boast; thou bearest not the root, but the root thee."

As St. Paul compares Christ with the olive tree, Christ compares Himself with the vine: "I am the vine; you the branches: he that abideth in Me, and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for without Me you can do nothing." Thus in the water of regeneration we enter into His death, and rise again in His life: as He is the fruitful olive, we are engrafted on Him: as He is the vine, we are embranched in Him as the root and stem of our life.

Inexhaustible in the diversity of his illustrations, St. Paul again compares our transition from Adam to Christ to the casting away of an old garment that we may be clothed with one that is new. For although Christ has atoned for our sins, and has purchased for us the grace of life; although with Him there is merciful forgiveness, and with Him plentiful redemption; yet all this is with Him, and not with us, until we come to Him, and accept freely with faith the sacrament of regeneration, by which we are transferred from the sinful body of Adam to the glorious body of Christ, that so we may belong to His kingdom. Hence St. Paul exhorts those whom he instructs: "If so be that you have heard Him, and have been taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off, according to the former conversation, the old man, who is corrupted according to the desires of error: and put ye on the new man, who, according to God, is created in justice, and holiness of truth." How is this transformation accomplished? St. Paul tells us: "Ye have been baptized; ye have put on Christ." As he says more explicitly in another place: "When the goodness and kindness of God our Saviour appeared; not by the works of Justice, which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the laver of regeneration, and renovation of the Holy Ghost, whom He hath poured upon us abundantly, through Jesus Christ our Saviour: that being

justified by His grace, we may be heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

This, again, is another of St. Paul's illustrative arguments, to which he often refers, that by our new birth in Christ through the regeneration of the Holy Spirit, through whom, as Christ was generated into our human nature, we are regenerated into Christ, we are made joint heirs with Him of eternal life. "For whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For you have not received the spirit of bondage again in fear; but you have received the spirit of adoption of sons, whereby we cry Abba (Father). For the Spirit Himself gives testimony to our spirit, that we are the sons of God. And if sons, heirs also; heirs indeed of God and joint heirs with Christ: yet so if we suffer with Him, that we may be glorified with Him."

We may sum up what has been thus far said in the words of St. Leo the Great, "If the Word had not been made flesh and dwelt among us; if the Creator had not descended into one common life with His creature; if He had not brought back the old humanity to a new beginning; death would have reigned from Adam even to the end, and an irrevocable condemnation would have rested upon all men. The very condition of their birth would have caused all men to perish. Of all the sons of men the Lord Jesus was alone born innocent, because He alone was conceived without defiling cupidity. He was made a man of our race, that we might be made the consorts of His divine nature. That origin which He took from the Virgin's womb, he deposited in the font of baptism: what was given to the mother was given to the water: that same power from on high, the overshadowing of the Holy Spirit, that caused Mary to bring forth our Saviour, causes the water to regenerate the believer. What could there have been provided more capable of healing the sick, of enlightening the blind, and of giving life to the dead, than the cure of the wounds of pride by the medicine of humility! It was by his neglecting the commands of God that Adam brought the condemnation upon us that is due to sin: and it was by His being made under the law that Jesus brought back to us the liberty of justice. It was by obeying the devil even to the extent of prevarication, that Adam deserved that we should die in him: and it was by obeying the Father even to the Cross, that Jesus obtained that we all should live in Him. It was by ambitionating angelic honours, that Adam lost the dignity of his nature:

and it was by taking upon Him our infirm condition, that Jesus raised up those souls to the heavenly places for whose sake He descended into hell. It was said to Adam, because of his pride: "Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." But it was said to Jesus, because of His humility: "Sit Thou at My right hand, until I make Thy enemies the footstool of Thy feet."*

As there are two heads of mankind, there are also two bodies, each cleaving to its own head, into which the human race is divided. The one is concorporated with Adam, the other with Christ. These are the two cities or kingdoms, so often described in the Holy Scriptures as the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God. This is the one great division of the human race, as God beholds the human family. Of these two cities or kingdoms St. Augustine wrote the history from the creation to his time, in his great and arduous work of "The City of God." As his chief object was to instruct the children of this world concerning the ways of God in the world, he began that history, as he tells us, with a sense of dismay, because he knew how hard it is to persuade the proud that the great force of virtue lies hidden in humility. For the city of this world takes its rise from pride, whilst the city of God is founded in humility. Christ as God in humiliation has founded the city of God: Satan the author of pride has founded the city of this world. In the city of God, the truth, the law, and the love of God prevail; but in the city of the world it is error and injustice and contention that have the sway. The one is called the city of Jerusalem, where the people of God live in unity and peace. The other is called the city of Babylon, because it is the city of division and confusion. Christ rules the one through His servants; Satan rules the other through his bondsmen. The aims of these two cities are as far asunder as heaven is from earth; for the inhabitants of the one seek God, and are but as travellers from this world to a better; whilst the inhabitants of the other confine their views to this world, and care not to look for the better world to come. The one rests in faith upon the revelations of God, as upon a rock of truth unchangeable; the other floats upon the opinions of this world, as upon banks of sand that are ever shifting and uncertain. In this world the populations of these two cities are visibly mingled together, although invisibly they are separated. But in the world to come they shall be for ever separated, as the

* S. Leo, *Serm.* 5, *In Nativ. Domini.*

justice of God shall separate them. But whilst they are in this world there is a frequent migration from one city to the other. For there are those who pass from the earthly to the heavenly city, but who are weak in faith, and fall back again. There are others who are visibly in the city of God, but their hearts are with the city of the world. And there are others who, although visibly in the city of the world, have their hearts with the city of God. As each of these cities is formed of men who have a body and a soul, a visible presence and an invisible spirit, in the visible kingdom of God are those who are visibly united with her, and openly profess her faith and obedience; but the just alone belong to the soul of God's kingdom, and shall alone inherit that kingdom after the great judicial division of mankind.

If we look into the interior spirit and life of these two kingdoms, nothing can be more unlike, nothing more opposite, than they are to each other. From a deep experience of both of them, St. Augustine has drawn their contrast in a celebrated passage. Two loves, he says, have founded these two cities. The love of self, carried to contempt of God, has made the earthly city; the love of God, carried to contempt of self, has made the heavenly city. The one, therefore, glories in herself, the other in God; the one seeks glory from men, the other puts her glory in God, who is the witness of their conscience. The one lifts up her head in self-glorification; the other says to God with an humble soul, "Thou, O God, art my glory, and the uplifter of my head." The earthly city is moved by the lust of power and dominion, and rejoices when her chiefs subdue the nations; but in the heavenly city all serve each other in mutual charity. Those who preside consult in charity, and those who are subject obey in charity. Whilst the earthly city puts her confidence in her own strength, the heavenly city seeks her strength from God. The wise men of the earthly city are wise in their own prudence, and live according to man; they seek the goods of the body, or of the intellect, or both together. If they know God, they do not glorify Him as God, nor give Him thanks; but they become vain in their thoughts, and their hearts are darkened. But in the heavenly city men know no greater wisdom than faith and piety, and the worship of the true God after the manner which He prescribes; and they expect their reward with all the saints and angels, that "God may be all in all."*

* S. August. *De Civitate Dei*, L. 14, c. 28.

These two cities, with their empires, date from the beginning of mankind. No sooner has Adam fallen than Christ appears in the promise of redemption. In the two first sons of Adam the two kingdoms become visible. In Abel and his children the kingdom of faith arises; in Cain and his descendants appears the kingdom of this world. Abel worships God, offering the sacrifice of the lamb, expressive of redemption through the blood of Christ; Cain offers but the fruits of the earth. Abel offers the sacrifice of obedience; Cain chooses an oblation of his own devising. In the person of Cain the city of this world already persecutes the city of God in the person of Abel, and this persecution is destined to continue through all time, until the two kingdoms are for ever separated. It is not without a profound reason that this conflict between the children of Adam is recorded in the beginning of the Holy Scriptures, where the child of injustice inflicts, and the child of justice suffers with patience; nor is it without profound reason that the Scriptures exhibit this conflict between the kingdom of the world and the kingdom of God, going on with ever-increasing intensity, as prophetically summed up in the closing book of the Scriptures.

The Kingdom of God is the Church of Christ, ever one and the same from the promise of redemption in Paradise to the end of time. "Christ yesterday," says St. Paul, "to-day, and He is the same for ever." He is the object and end of the patriarchal worship from Abel to Abraham. He is contemplated in the divine deliverance of Israel from Egypt. He is the end of the law, and of the sacrifices. He is contemplated in the prophetical teachings from Abraham to John the Baptist. One dispensation is added to another, the latter enlarging upon the former, and each more wealthy in the expression of Christ, until Christ appears, and all those figures vanish like shadows before the sun in presence of the reality. As the Church sings in the ordination of her priests: "The Holy Lord, Almighty Father and Eternal God, through whom all things are brought onwards, and by whom all things are strengthened, doth always enlarge the growth of rational nature with greater increase unto better things." As God first creates the elements of things, and then by His provident wisdom advances them with time to their better state; so in the spiritual order of good which He provides for rational natures, He unfolds one dispensation after another, each the amplification

of the former, until the whole divine plan is revealed in its magnificent mercy, and brought to the perfection of good. But Christ, the Deliverer and True Father of mankind, is the beginning and the end of all.

This has been admirably expressed by St. Augustine: "Whatever," he says, "appeared in a sacred and mystical manner to the fathers in angelic miracles were figures of this sacrament, of this sacrifice, of this priest, of this God; these and all that the fathers did were figures of Him before he was sent and made of a woman, that every creature might speak in facts concerning the One to come, who is the salvation of all who are restored from death. As we had turned with wicked impiety from the One True and Supreme God to rebellion and discord, we fell from Him who is One to many things, were divided by many things, and clove to many things; it therefore became needful that, through the merciful command of God, many things should proclaim that One, and that the One should not come until many things had proclaimed Him, that they might be the witnesses of His coming, and that when at last we come to that One, we may be unburdened of those many things."*

Of those many things that spoke of Christ, the one that spoke most clearly and universally was the sacrifice of the lamb. Christ is called "the Lamb that was sacrificed from the foundation of the world." Abel offered the lamb in sacrifice, and became the victim of his faith. Noe after his deliverance from the flood offered sacrifices of all clean animals; and God gave him the promise: "I will no more destroy every living soul as I have done." Abraham prepares to sacrifice his beloved son at God's command. God accepts his will, and a ram is accepted in his place. The Israelites in Egypt sacrifice a lamb in each house, as God commands, their doorposts are stained with its blood, and the destroying angel passes over them uninjured. The Paschal Lamb is the great central institution of the Law of Moses. The prophet Isaias saw Christ in these sacrifices, and these sacrifices in Christ. "The Lord hath laid upon Him the iniquities of us all. He was offered because it was His own will, and he opened not His mouth. He shall be led as a sheep to the slaughter, and shall be dumb as a lamb before the shearer, and He shall not open His mouth. He was

* S. August. *De Trinitate*, L. 4. c. 7.

taken away from distress and judgment: who shall declare His generation?"

St. John the Baptist, the predestined connexion between the Old Testament and the New, fulfils his divine office first by a figurative baptism, then by pointing Christ out to men in these words: "Behold the Lamb of God, behold Him that taketh away the sins of the world." After the Lamb of God was slain, and many had been purified in His blood, St. Peter reminds the faithful of His kingdom that "you were not redeemed with corruptible things as gold or silver, from your vain conversation of the tradition of your fathers: but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb unspotted and undefiled; foreknown indeed before the foundation of the world, but manifested in the last times for us." The chief of Apostles then reminds them how they became partakers in this precious blood: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God who liveth and reigneth for ever." Finally, in the closing Book of Scriptures, St. John the Evangelist, rapt in spirit, beholds the golden altar before the throne of God, and upon the altar the Lamb standing as it were for ever slain; and the Lamb unseals the book of mysteries, and sends forth the seven spirits of God into all the earth. Before Him ascends the incense of prayer from all the saints whom He has redeemed; around Him are the angels and the elders of His Church. Before Him in their orders are the thousands of thousands whom he has redeemed from the twelve tribes of Israel, and from every tongue, and tribe, and nation; and they sing the canticle of God and of the Lamb. With a voice like the sound of many waters they sing: "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and honour and glory, and benediction." And the Lamb in the midst of the throne "shall rule them, and shall lead them to the waters of life, and shall wipe away every tear from their eyes." And "He was clothed with a garment sprinkled with blood, and His name is THE WORD OF GOD."

Such is the kingdom of God. Such is the Church of Christ. All who are generated into Christ are generated into His kingdom. It is composed of all the angels who stood firm through the grace of the Eternal Word, their mediator with the Father; and of all just and faithful men and women who either lived by the grace of Christ, believing and trusting to the promise, before

He came into the world, or who have lived by His faith and grace in His kingdom since He came into the world; each according to the dispensation granted to their times, whether in the Church expecting Christ, or in the Church possessing Christ.

The wonderful descriptions of the celestial kingdom, that conclude each period of the conflict of Christ's Church on earth, grow more magnificent in the Apocalypse, as each epoch sends its contribution of martyrs, confessors, virgins, and saints of every class, to fill up the heavenly places, and swell the eternal chorus. The eternal rewards are promised, with ever-renewed conflict, to them who overcome their adversary by the conquest of themselves, and who account this life as nothing in comparison with the life to come.

But before the price of our redemption was paid, the gates of Heaven were closed against mankind. Even the just men of the former times looked to God with fear and trembling, and went down in sorrow to the grave, knowing that their spirits must abide in a region of exile until their Divine Deliverer should come. They felt, as they said, that they should not praise God in the land of the living. They called their place of detention, the Hebrews *Sheol*, the Greeks *Hades*—that is, the lower regions;—The Latins *Limbus*—that is, the region bordering on Heaven. Christ himself called it the bosom of Abraham, not the bosom of God, as being the place where the father of the faithful awaited in expectancy, with all the children of faith and justice. The Hades of Homer, and of other pagan writers, and that thirst of the departed spirits for sacrificial blood, presents an evident link of common tradition with the Sheol of God's people.

But St. Peter tells us, that whilst the body of Christ was dead on the Cross, His living spirit went down and preached to the captives who were in prison, even from the days of Noe. And St. Paul tells us, that before He ascended to Heaven, Christ first descended into the lower regions of the earth, and made captives of those who dwelt there in captivity. The Apostle speaks of the unity of the whole Church as the one body of Christ in one spirit, through His gifts; and to show that the Church of the former ages is one body with the Church of Christ, he says: "Wherefore He saith: Ascending on high, He led captivity captive; He gave gifts to men. Now that He ascended, what is it, but because He also descended first into the lower regions of

the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that He might fill all things." This is that descent into hell which is expressed in the Apostles' Creed; not into the everlasting hell, of which we have such awful descriptions in the Prophets, but into the limbus of the fathers. Of this descent and deliverance we have magnificent descriptions in the prophetic writings under the figure of nearer events.

The Spirit of Christ went down thither from His Cross, broke the iron bars, and burst the brazen gates asunder. The whole region was stirred at His coming, and the mighty ones arose from their seats; for the light of the long-looked-for presence of their Redeemer shone upon them, and they heard the voice of their Deliverer. Listen to the ghostly dialogue:—

"Who is this that cometh from Edom, with garments stained from Bosra; this beautiful One in His robe, walking in the greatness of His strength?

"I that speak justice, and am a defender to save.

"Why, then, is Thy apparel red, and Thy garments like theirs who tread the wine-press?

"I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the Gentiles there is not a man with Me. I have trampled them down in My indignation, and have trodden them down in My wrath, and their blood is sprinkled upon My garments, and all My apparel is stained. For the day of vengeance is in My heart, and the year of My redemption is come. I looked about, and there was none to help; I sought, and there was none to give aid; and My own arm hath saved for Me, and My indignation itself hath helped Me.

"I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord, the praise of the Lord for all the things that the Lord hath bestowed on us, and for the multitude of His good things to the house of Israel, which He hath given them according to His kindness, and according to the multitude of His mercies.

"And He said: Surely they are My people, children that will not deny; so He became their Saviour. In all their affliction He was not troubled, and the angel of His presence saved them. In His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, and He carried them, and lifted them up all the days of old."*

And they said: "Come, and let us return to the Lord; for

* Isaias, c. lxiii.

He hath taken us, and He will heal us. He will strike, and He will cure us. He will revive us after two days; on the third day He will raise us up, and we shall live in His sight. We shall know, and we shall follow on, that we may know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning light, and He will come to us as the early and the latter rain to the earth."*

On the third day His spirit arose from the limbus of the Fathers, attended by all the spirits of the just, and left it empty. Many of those Saints arose and appeared to numbers of people in Jerusalem. His spirit united with His body, and as the Apostles significantly say, "He arose *again* from the dead," because His first rising was with the spirits of the just from the lower regions of the earth.

On the fortieth day He ascended into Heaven with all that glorious company. Now are the angelic hosts to meet their brethren from the earth, whom, through the long ages, they have served; whom they have helped in all their combats. And King David, on his prophetic harp, had mused upon this rapturous moment:—

"This is the generation of them that seek Him; of them that seek the face of the God of Jacob.

"Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in.

"Who is this King of Glory?

"The Lord who is strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.

"Lift up your gates, O ye princes; and be ye lifted up, O eternal gates, and the King of Glory shall enter in.

"Who is this King of Glory?

"The Lord of Hosts; He is the King of Glory."

Christ carries His blood through the veil into the eternal sanctuary, and behold, He stands for us upon the golden altar before the throne of God; the Lamb for ever slain for us; the victim for ever pleading for us; the High Priest for ever interceding for us. And around Him, and before Him, is that great multitude, whose voice is as many waters and as great thunders, as they sing the canticle of God and the Lamb: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof because Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God, in Thy

* Osee, c. vi.

blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation, and hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign on the earth."

We here contemplate the marvellous unity of the Church in heaven, as its countless members centre their spirits upon the throne of God and the altar of the Lamb. The whole heavenly part of St. John's Revelations is a picture of this unity. But there is also an earthly history in these Revelations, running from the Apostolic times to the end of the world; where amidst the unceasing conflicts between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of Satan, between the Church and the ungodly world, we are made to see another order of union, a union of a most intimate kind between the Church in heaven and the Church on earth. We are made to see that all the victories of the Church in the world are achieved through the blood and the grace of Christ. We behold the angels and saints intensely interested in the combats of their brethren on earth. We see the angels descending in the ministry of God, and confronting the adversaries of God's servants. This is but a continuance in the Church of what we find throughout the older Scriptures, and in the records of these later times St. John often adopts the language of the older prophets in describing the combats of the Church with the world, as if to show that they are only now having their final fulfilment.

As the kingdom of this world is severed from the unitive body of God's revealed truth, and from the unitive grace whereby the heart cleaves to that all-uniting truth, the world is necessarily broken up into endless divisions; and whilst it bears the stains and wrinkles of concupiscence upon its brow, it bears on its features the marks of selfish thought and of every varying opinion. Self-love, self-opinion, self-interest, and self-exaltation are the motive-powers that move the world in opposition to the kingdom of God. Self-love in all its vicious forms is the enemy of God, the adversary of His truth, the corrupter of justice and the enemy of social unity. Pride resists God, and dissolves all unity; whether by heresy it sets up man's opinion against the unity of faith; or by schism it sets up self-will against obedience to authority; or by ambition it stirs up nation against nation; or by iniquity it divides the man against his conscience.

But the Church of God is one and undivided throughout the universe of heaven, earth, and the region under the earth, where

just souls are purified for their entrance into heaven. And this union of every part of the Church St. Paul expresses in the following sentence: "That in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those things that are in heaven, on earth, and under the earth. And that every tongue should confess that the Lord Jesus Christ is in the glory of God the Father." The unity of God's kingdom rests upon the unity of God, upon the unity of Christ, upon the unity of His body which is His Church, and upon the unity of the means of redemption, which He has prescribed, as He alone has power to prescribe. The Father is one, the Word of the Father is one, the Holy Spirit is one; and all these three are one. Truth is one for all minds, justice is one for all wills, the authority of God is one for the obedience of all souls; Christ is one, His doctrine is one, His body is one, His sacrament of regeneration into His body is one. One is the supreme end of man, and one is the way to that supreme end. Christ Himself has said: "I am the way, the truth, and the life." One, therefore, and only one, is the kingdom of God on earth, that universal kingdom which Daniel so clearly predicted and described, and of which Christ declared that the unity of its members should always be the proof of His presence; one on earth and one with the kingdom in heaven, where Christ reigns all in all. The unity of faith in the Church rests upon the unity of that truth and of that unitive grace which Christ has deposited in her bosom, and upon His promise to abide with her, as the life in the body, even to the ending of the world.

What is Christ? Christ is all that He is by His divine and human nature; all that He has spoken of truth; all that He has wrought of justice; all that He has done for our redemption. He is all that He has organized of power and ordained of authority to teach His word, to govern His kingdom, and to minister His grace through the sacraments which He has established. He is all that He imparts of regeneration, pardon, light, and grace, and consolation, to all who receive those gifts from Him. All that emanates from Christ is Christ. To accept a divided truth, a divided justice, a divided kingdom of God, is to accept a divided Christ, which is impossible. When the Corinthians divided themselves into parties, marked by the names of their several teachers, St. Paul rebuked them in these terms: "Now this I say that every one of you saith: I indeed am of Paul; and I am of Apollo; and I am of

Cephas; and I am of Christ. Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?" We must accept the whole Christ; but this is to accept His whole truth, all that He has instituted, and all He has ordained; not as we choose to fancy them, nor upon any man's opinion of them, but from the authority of that kingdom or Church in which He has deposited them, and which He has commanded to keep them, or we neither have faith in Christ, nor can we be members of His kingdom.

Christ organized His kingdom in a visible unity, conspicuous to all men, and He declared that "a kingdom divided against itself cannot stand." He made the entrance into that kingdom through the door of a visible sacrament. He organized its authorities in subordination to one supreme authority established in one person. To that one He gave the keys of power. To that one He committed the chief and universal charge. That one He made the foundation upon which the structure of the Church was built; and to that one He promised that the gates of hell should never prevail against what was built upon him. He ever takes the lead, and his successors have ever claimed, have ever exercised the Apostolate, have ever been recognized and obeyed as the Vicars of Christ. There has never been anything like this compendious and comprehensive unity in the world besides. Nothing in human nature can explain it. It is the key-stone of that unity of Christ's body which He commanded to be, and for which He prayed. What have we said that St. Paul has not said more compendiously: "One body and one spirit, as you are called in the one hope of your calling. One Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in us all."

There is nothing on which the great Apostle has been more explicit or emphatic than the organic unity of the Church or body of Christ. He says: "As the body is one, and hath many members; and all the members of the body, whereas they are many, are one body; so also is Christ. For in one spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Gentiles, whether bond or free: and in one Spirit we have all been made to drink?" In the same chapter the Apostle enlarges upon the mutual connection and dependence of the many members of this body, and of the one spirit that breathes through the whole; and he thus concludes: "That there may be no schism in the body, but the members might be mutually careful one for another. And if one member suffers anything, all

the members suffer with it; or, if one member glory, all the members rejoice with it. Now you are the body of Christ, and members of member." That is to say, the faithful of the Church of Corinth were members of a member of the universal Church. To the Ephesians the Apostle brings out the organic unity of the Church in a yet more striking way. After speaking of the "one body and one spirit," and the rest, as we have recently quoted, he thus explains the construction of this unity: "He that descended is the same also that ascended above all the heavens, that He might fill all things. And He gave some to be Apostles, and some prophets, and others evangelists, and others pastors and doctors. For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the building up of the body of Christ: until we all meet in the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ: that henceforth we be no more children tossed to and fro, and carried about by every wind of doctrine by the wickedness of men, by cunning craftiness by which they lie in wait to deceive. But doing the truth in charity, we may in all things grow up in Him who is the head, even Christ. From whom the whole body, being compactly and fitly joined together, by what every joint supplieth, according to the operation in every part, maketh increase of the body unto the building of itself in charity." With a sense thus vivid of the organic unity of the Church, felt as vividly as any one can feel his own organic unity, the Apostles were intolerant of all heresies, sects, and schisms, which they repeatedly denounced, forbidding all communication with their authors. And as the Church has always lived in the same keen sense of her unity, she has never hesitated to cut those off who disturbed her unity, whenever they have proved incurable.

As man lost his dignity by disobedience, and his spiritual strength by self-assertion, and as all the divisions of mankind have come of their terrible egotism; the whole plan of the Saviour of mankind was to destroy this egotism, this self-assertion and disobedience. His great object therefore was, to reunite the human family in Himself, that through His humanity they might cleave to His divinity, that so they might recover their unity in one, and their final end.

Consider the nature of man. He is not a mere intelligence. He is made of body and soul, most closely adhering to each other.

He is compacted of sense and imagination as much as of intelligence. Before he can be restored to God, all these elements must be taken hold of. What carries him from truth but his senses? What leads him into error but his imagination? What takes him from the spirit but the flesh? What holds him back from God but his pride or sloth? What withdraws him from the virtues but the passions of his fallen nature? They fill the imagination with the promise of great things that they can never perform. We talk of the five or the seven senses, but what a manifold network there is in each of these senses, that work from outwards inwardly, and when they have reached there, what an unsearchable network there is in their combination as the result of their play meets in the imagination. How innumerable, again, are the objects that attract the senses, and through them affect the soul. How these senses, and the imagination on which they work, catch the flames of concupiscence, and conspire to fill the soul with earthly to the exclusion of heavenly desires.

Nothing can be more evident than that the senses and even the imagination of man required to be rectified as well as his soul, and that the body must be brought under subjection before the soul can recover her superiority. Those who speak of a purely spiritual religion as most suitable to man, know not what they say. A purely spiritual religion is for natures purely spiritual like the angels. As if man had not fallen in body as well as soul; as if he had not fallen through the very means of his corporal senses; as if the soul did not live in the senses as well as in herself; as if the senses did not act with amazing power on the soul; as if this covetous body did not make the soul covetous; or the sensuous body did not make the soul sensuous; or the impure body did not make the soul impure; or the restless body did not make the soul passionate. How are we to reach the revelation of God except through visible teaching? How are the spiritual things of God to be laid hold of securely except as clothed with sensible forms, whether of language, figures of speech—those brighteners of intelligence drawn from visible things, or of sacraments? What is the Divine Incarnation but an appeal to mankind through God's visible human nature? What are the words and actions, the life and death of Christ, but one grand appeal to our spiritual nature through every sense and feeling of our earthly frame?

To deny that religion embraces body as well as soul, is to deny

the efficacy of the Divine Incarnation. To deny the organic unity of Christ's universal Church, is to deny both the unity of Christ and the unity of the human family, which He came to restore and to perfect. Who that understands human nature can fail to see that the Incarnation of the Eternal Word is most divinely fitted to the requirements of human restoration? If all religion is incorporated in Christ; if it be all summed up in the words of St. Paul, "Christ yesterday, to-day, and He is the same for ever"; and if in Christ our religion is both spiritual and corporal; what else ought we to look for but that His divine institutions should reflect His Incarnation, and should incorporate His authority in visible persons, and His spiritual gifts in visible elements? The body of Christ is pure, undefiled, and ever obedient to His spirit. His spirit is not filled with flesh, but His flesh with spirit. That body is the veil and the vital instrument of His spiritual action; through its medium He takes hold of the senses of men, and through their senses He takes hold of their spirit. Christ is a universal sacrament. The eyes of men look on Him, and their souls feel His power. His words enter their ears, and light passes to their minds. He commands, and nature yields to His voice. He puts forth His hand, and power goes forth from Him, to heal the sick, to cure the blind, to raise the dead. He draws all visible things into parables, in which he makes the truth visible and perceptible to human sense. The Eternal Word tempers all His acts and teachings to human nature in a human manner, fitted both to sense and understanding, and expressed with human sympathy. He weeps over evil, and the souls of men are opened by His tenderness. He smiles and their hearts expand; He rebukes, and they fear. He loves, and they are drawn to His love. He blesses with open hands, and their hearts feel His grace. He takes bread into His hands, and with a consecrating benediction He says: "This is my body," and at His creative word it becomes what He calls it. And so of the cup with His blood. His body and blood are full of His life and spirit, and whilst His disciples partake of the one they receive the other.

Christianity consists more in actions than in words; the object of teaching is to bring us to action, and external action is but the expression of internal action. Can there be anything more striking to mortal sense, or healing to human sensuality, than to look with the eyes of faith upon the sufferings and death of Christ? What

can be more purifying to our senses than to contemplate that agony in which the Son of God suffers in innocence as a penitent for our sins? What more destructive to our pride than His humiliations before the Courts of Jerusalem? There we see the value of this world's judgments, when it speaks in the cause of God. There we see the God of truth and justice condemned to death, to be even put out of this world, because He troubles the pride of life. What can be more corrective of the unclean passions of our nature than to behold the Son of God denuded to the cruel scourge? Pilate declared Him innocent, and then gave Him up to be lacerated and torn in body and in soul; and Christ submits to atone for our sensualities. What can more effectually open our heart to Christ with repentance, than to look upon the Divine Victim for our sins and healer of our sorrows, as, crowned with thorns, and with the Cross upon His shoulders, He moves on his dreary way to Mount Calvary; where, extended on the Cross, and fastened with nails to its wood, and lifted up by human malignity unto a divine sacrifice, He bleeds for us, suffers the extremes of anguish for us, prays for us, and pardons us; dies to give us life; and reconciles the world that crucifies Him to God and the Father.

It is your mortal eyes that bring your spirit to see, your mortal ears that bring your soul to listen, and your heart to know, this man, this God, this priest, this victim, torn and rent for the destruction of your concupiscence; this blood of God shed for the cleansing of your sins; this fountain of life and grace expended for your use and service; this sermon of sermons, this truth of truths, enacted before your eyes, and appealing through every mortal sense and feeling to your immortal soul. It is a spectacle that subdues every petulant passion and conceit into awe and silence; fills your whole being with the sense of how God has loved you, and given Himself for you; and brings down the whole pride of life into humble fear, and faith, and gratitude. Then the charity of Christ falls upon us like fire, and our hearts are constrained to acknowledge that, as Christ died for us, we ought not to live to ourselves, but for Him who died for us, and rose for our justification. Then we understand how we ought to mortify our earthly members, that Christ may reign in our mortal body. Then we can comprehend how the old things ought to pass away, that we may become a new creature in Christ.

Blind is every one, and blind with pride, who cannot see that

the whole intent of the Divine Incarnation is to take hold of us bodily as well as spiritually, and to bring the whole man under subjection to the rule of the Son of God. Blind is he who does not see the condition of his own nature, and that the great obstacle to his bringing his spirit to the Spirit of God is the opposition of his carnal to his spiritual nature; and that it is through the conquering of his senses that his mind and heart are conquered to the light and grace of God.

The first design for the happiness of man was to make one kingdom of the human family, all being united in truth and charity both with their Creator and with each other. They were therefore created in corporate unity, in one father and from one flesh and blood, whereby all men were cemented into one common and natural brotherhood; and were intended to be united with God and with each other through one common light of faith, and by the heavenly gift of charity. But this great design for the securing of human happiness was broken and destroyed by man himself. Sin entered into him, and with sin the loss of the principle of union, and division took place within the man, and broke forth, and filled the world with contentions, enmities, hatreds, and rivalries. The restoration of man would, therefore, be very incomplete, were it not a corporate as well as a personal restoration, were it not that unity of brotherhood re-established in Christ, which sin had destroyed by the fall of Adam. This was the great work of the Son of God. He established his kingdom or Church, in which those who were no longer united in the blood of Adam were united in His blood, so that they who were before divided in soul were re-united together in His truth and grace.

This is that kingdom of God which the prophet Daniel saw in vision, with the kingdoms of the earth falling down before it. The king of Babylon saw "a stone cut out of a mountain without hands." This stone is Christ, of whom St. Peter says: "The stone which the builders rejected, the same is made the head of the corner." Then the stone "became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." And this is the Prophet's interpretation of the vision: "In the days of those kingdoms, the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that shall never be destroyed, and His kingdom shall not be delivered up to another people, and it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and itself shall stand for ever." This universal, inalienable, and everlasting

kingdom has ever been regarded as the kingdom of Christ, nor can it be any other. The prophet marked out the very time and the conditions of its appearance in the world. To secure the unity, life, and perpetuity of this kingdom, Christ gave to it a divine and a four-fold power. This four-fold power was received from Him as the King, the Priest, the Teacher, and the Saviour of mankind.

The first power Christ gives to His kingdom is government, invested in a priesthood derived from His own. He centres this government in one, as the secure foundation of its unity, and gives to that one the keys of power, and the command to feed His whole flock as the shepherd of men. He establishes that one as a rock, and gives His strength to that rock to sustain the whole building of the Church.

Having given His kingly power to one, the Apostolic authority which He had first concentrated in that one He distributes to the twelve. But their Apostolate expires with them, and the sacerdotal and pastoral power continues with their successors. But the Apostleship continues to the end of time in the succession of the one in whom it was first concentrated. Then the Divine Founder of the Church establishes a second order of clergy, co-operating with the first, in the seventy-two disciples.

Having provided for the government of His kingdom, He deposits with that goverment His eternal truth, with authority and command to teach that truth to all nations, and with the promise to be with the teachers whom He has appointed, and to keep them in all truth to the end of time. He thus gives to all men of good will the certainty and security as to where they may find His authority, and where they may obtain His truth.

In the hands of that authorized priesthood He also ordains His sacraments, the visible and most certain channels of His invisible grace, for the cleansing, the sanctifying, and the consecrating of human nature.

He also institutes a Divine worship in His own Divine sacrifice, to be the great and the perpetual centre of all worship. In this sacrifice Christ Himself is still the sovereign priest, still the sacred victim; not another sacrifice, but always the same that was offered on the Cross. As that sacrifice is always offered for mankind in heaven above, so is it offered on the earth beneath, by Christ Himself through the hands of His appointed ministers. He thus fulfils His promise through the last of His prophets, that "from

the rising of the sun to the going down thereof, my name is great among the Gentiles, and in every place there is sacrifice, and there is offered to my name a clean oblation."

The Eucharistic Sacrifice and Sacrament, the sublimest communication between heaven and earth, the greatest of God's gifts to man, is the extension through time of the Divine Incarnation. What is commenced in the sacrament of regeneration is completed in the Eucharistic Sacrament. The first of these sacraments brings the child of Adam into the mystical body of Christ, the second perfects his union with Christ in the partaking of His very body and blood, filled with spirit and life. And by this access to the spring of grace and truth, he obtains more than ever he lost in the tree of life.

In all the communications of God with man there are divine and even infinite reservations, into which we neither can nor ought to penetrate beyond the veil of faith. God reveals not His Majesty; He gives us no approach to His sacred privacy. He withholds us from the splendour of His insufferable light and burning glory. We cannot see God with our mortal eyes or with our spiritual eyes; there is no proportion between them and the unspeakable vision of God, until, after our probation is over, they shall be prepared for their measure of beatitude. Yet the just soul often feels the tempered influence of the eternal presence. The Word Incarnate was seen by mortal eyes, yet in a human way, so that faith alone discovered that He was the Son of God. Once alone, to chosen witnesses, He appeared in effulgent glory, which overwhelmed their sense and soul, so that they could not continue to look upon Him. After He arose from the dead, He was seen often, and by many, yet in a way that was toned to their ordinary senses, until the crowd of witnesses beheld His ascent to heaven. In all these revelations of the Son of God there were infinite reservations. But His Eucharistic presence is pre-eminently the mystery of faith and the reward of faith. Even His sacrificed humanity is presented under veils. The external qualities of bread and wine remain to form those veils, whilst the substance is changed into His body and blood in virtue of His own creative words. Faith penetrates those veils with love, whilst unbelief is turned away.

The substance of things is the object of human intelligence, but not of human sense. God alone has the perfect knowledge and view of substance. This, again, is a divine reservation. Substance

is that secret force or energy which sustains the qualities presented to the senses. From the qualities, in the ordinary course of nature, we infer the substance. But in the Eucharistic Sacrament, whilst the qualities remain, the substance is changed, and the qualities veil the substantial presence of the body and blood of Christ. The reality is concealed from the sensual man, whilst it exercises the faith of the spiritual man. For faith is the fundamental condition of spiritual life in this world of probation. As the presence of the Eternal Word, who is in the world, though the world knows Him not, is veiled from us by the whole creation, so the presence of His body and blood is veiled as in a mystery, that it may not be seen except by faith. Pride is ever curious and restless to know everything before its time. Patient humility is content to await the hour when God shall reveal all things. Pride, which would command all things, turns with averted eyes from the evidence that rests on divine authority. But the divine mysteries are ordained for humble souls, whose subjection to God is the preparation for the reception of eternal things. There is even a divinely benignant consideration for our human weakness in this veiling of the heavenly mysteries, which the Greek Father Theophylact has expressed in these terms: "That we may not hold back with fear at the sight of the body and blood upon the holy tables of our churches, God condescends to our weakness, infuses the power of life into the oblations, and the energy of His blood."*

What a scene was that in the synagogue of Capharnaum, whose walls have recently been brought again to light. It is recorded in the 6th chapter of St. John. The multitude who had eaten the miraculous bread the day before followed our Lord across the lake in their boats. Jesus said to them: "I am the living bread which came down from Heaven; if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever; and the bread that I will give is my flesh, for the life of the world. The Jews, therefore, debated among themselves, saying: How can this man give us His flesh to eat?" Clear proof is this how well they understood His words. They knew not that He was the Son of God, nor did they know how His flesh was to be eaten; but they had no doubt of His having declared that His flesh was to be eaten: "Then Jesus said to them: Amen, amen, I say unto you, except you eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink His blood, you shall not have

* Theophylact. *Comment. in Joan*, c. vi.

life in you. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed. He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father; so he that eateth me, the same also shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from Heaven." This most clear, emphatic, unmistakable, and often repeated declaration, literally staggered His audience. Now mark the result. There could not be, nor was there, any doubt as to His meaning. The difficulty was to believe what was so new and strange. Many, therefore, of His disciples, hearing it, said: "This saying is hard, and who can hear it? But Jesus, knowing in Himself that His disciples murmured at this, said to them: Does this scandalize you? If, then, you shall see the Son of man ascend up where He was before. It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But there are some of you that believe not."

They thought of eating His dead body, like ordinary food; whilst he spoke of His living and life-giving body. Yet he points to this once more: What if you saw me ascend to heaven, where I was before? He then explains that the flesh is nothing without the spirit of life; and that their fleshly views will not help them to accept His words without faith. Now mark the final result: "After this many of His disciples went back, and walked no more with Him." They went away because they could not believe that they must eat His flesh and blood. "Then Jesus said to the Twelve: Will you also go away? And Simon Peter answered Him: Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and have known that Thou art the Christ, the Son of God." The apostles understood not how this was to be more than the multitude, but they believed He would fulfil what He said, because He is the Son of God. We may imagine the impression left on the minds of the apostles by these plain but mysterious words, and by this extraordinary scene. How often must they have recalled it? How often they must have talked it over, and have wondered how this promise was to be fulfilled. But at the Last Supper their eyes were suddenly opened, and they knew how they were to partake of His body and blood.

Why should it be thought incredible that Christ should give us His flesh and blood? There are only two impossibilities in the question, and they both vanish the moment we take a comprehensive view of human nature. The first is the very changing of the substance of bread and wine into Christ's flesh and blood; the second is the multiplication of that body and blood according to the multiplication of them who partake. As to the first question, how can we refuse to the second Adam, who is both God and man, what we must allow to the first Adam, and to every one of his descendants? How does man grow from birth to maturity? and how does he maintain his strength, but by a natural process of transubstantiation? He is constantly changing the substance of meat and drink into the substance of His body and blood. We may call this process a natural miracle, for it is certainly most mysterious. How does life take hold of these dead substances, animate them for a time, and then let go of them? If the living body and blood of the natural man are formed, and grow, and are strengthened, by this natural process of transubstantiation, how can we deny to the divine and supernatural man the power to exercise a divine transubstantiation? The first is according to the power of man; the second is according to the power of God. The natural man takes bread, and, ceasing to be bread, it becomes his flesh and blood. Christ, the Son of God, takes bread, and says: "This is my body," and it becomes His flesh and blood; and in like manner He takes wine, and says: "This is my blood which shall be shed for you;" and it becomes His blood inseparable from His body. The bread and wine are separately consecrated, to represent the separation of His blood from His body in His sacrifice. But as His blood was resumed to His body in the resurrection, and He liveth for ever, there is henceforth no separation of His blood from His body, or of His spirit and life from both; and it is His spirit and life that profit us.

The Fathers of the Church compare this change, this transmutation, this transubstantiation of bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, with the change of water into wine at Cana; with the changing of the rod of Aaron into a serpent; with the changing of the waters of the Nile into blood; with the sweetening of the bitter waters of Mara; with the conversion of food into the substance of the body; and with the change of earth and water into the substance of plants.

What we have here said was well summed up in the Comment of Theophylact on the 6th chapter of St. John: "Observe," he says, "that the bread eaten by us is not a mere figure of the Lord's flesh, but it is the very flesh of the Lord. For He did not say 'the bread which I give you is the figure of my flesh,' but He said: 'It is my flesh.' This bread is transformed by the secret words, through the mystical benediction and the coming of the Holy Spirit, into the flesh of the Lord. Nor let it disturb any one that the bread must be believed to be flesh. For even whilst the Lord walked in the flesh, and received nourishment from bread, that bread which He ate was changed into His body, and became like His sacred flesh, and contributed after the human manner to the increase and support thereof. Therefore, now also the bread is changed into the flesh of the Lord."*

The second difficulty is the multiplied participation of the body and blood of Christ. Yet what are we all but the multiplication of the body of Adam. What if, as after the Deluge, the human family were again reduced to one parental stock? Who can doubt but that from one man the earth might be again repeopled? How is the body of Adam multiplied into the great human family, except that it obtains its power to multiply by the transubstantiation of food into corporal life? If the first man can be thus multiplied, if every man can be thus multiplied; how is it that the perfect man, the God man, whose work it is to restore all men, cannot equally multiply the communication of His body by another mode of transubstantiation, not unlike the first?

It must be ever remembered that Christ is the fountain of our new and regenerated humanity, as Adam was of the old humanity; and that from Christ, as the head, life flows into the members. The Holy Communion is the consummation of what is begun in baptism, since by it the old man is more and more transferred into the new man. As fast, therefore, as the old Adam becomes regenerated, after being multiplied in the body of evil, so fast does the new Adam multiply the communication of the body of grace and life; that we may enter into His life through His sacramentalized body, may partake of the vital principle of the resurrection from the dead, and live by Christ, as He lives by the Father.

But the Holy Eucharist is more than this, it is a sacrifice in the

* Theophylact. *Comment. in Joan*, c. vi. See Dr. Russell's notes on the *Systema Theologicum* of Leibnitz, Art. *Transubstantiation.*

act of becoming a sacrament. The sacrifice of the lamb prefigured the sacrifice of Christ from the days of Abel until the Last Supper. Our Lord then celebrated that figurative sacrifice Himself for the last time, immediately after which He established His own. So that there has been no interruption of the sacrifice of the lamb from Abel until our day, except that at the Last Supper the figurative gave place to the true Lamb of God, the shadow disappeared before the substance. He took bread, and giving thanks, He broke, and said: "Take ye and eat, this is my body which shall be delivered for you. This do for the commemoration of me. In like manner also the cup after He had supped, saying: This chalice is the New Testament in my blood. This do ye, as often as you shall drink, for the commemoration of me. For as often as you shall eat this bread and drink this chalice you shall show the death of the Lord, until He come."

Observe that Christ not only delivered to the Apostles the mysteries of His body and blood, but that He spoke of it as His body *delivered* for us. The Greek and Syriac texts say: "My body that shall be *broken* for you." On which St. Chrysostom says: "The breaking of the body in the sacrament expresses the breaking and suffering on the Cross." In like manner, elsewhere, Christ says: "This is the cup of my blood which shall be shed for many, unto the remission of sins." But the body broken and offered for us, the blood shed for the remission of our sins, constitute the sacrifice of Christ. Christ therefore celebrated His sacrifice at the Last Supper, and commanded its celebration to all future times. St. Paul says that He offered Himself "once, for ever," which signifies that the one offering is continued for ever, yet is always the one and same offering that was made upon the Cross. And St. John beholds the Lamb upon the golden altar in heaven, "standing as it were for ever slain." He beholds the Divine victim in a perpetual state of sacrifice. Again, St. Paul compares the sacrificed blood of Christ with the blood of the old victims of the Tabernacle and the Temple, which sanctified all that it touched, and was carried yearly through the veil into the Holy of Holies; whilst Christ carries His blood into the Holy Heavens, by a new and living way, which He hath dedicated through the veil, His flesh, as "a high priest over the house of God." The Apostle therefore says in another place:

"We have an altar, of which they who serve the tabernacle do not partake."

It is not another sacrifice, but the same that was offered on Calvary; offered on Calvary with the real shedding of blood, offered on our altars with the representative and commemorative shedding of that blood which is accomplished by the separate and distinct consecration of His body and of His blood, the one in the form of bread, the other in the form of wine. But whilst this double consecration and communion is essential for the priest who offers the sacrifice in the power of Christ, and as His minister; yet as Christ is no longer dead but liveth for ever, He is not divided, and therefore whoever receives under one kind, receives the body and blood, the life and spirit of Christ.

Here, then, is the centre of all Christian worship, in which the fruits of the oblation on the Cross are plentifully received. The Mass is not a mere prayer, although the sublimest of all prayers; not a mere instruction, although the divinest of instructions; the Mass is a divine action, in which the priest represents Christ, and in which Christ presents His immolation to God for man. As He sits in His sacrificed but glorious body at the right hand of God, "making perpetual intercession for us," in the same body upon our altars He makes intercession for us. The sacrifice of the altar is not only the most sacred, but it is the freest of all forms of worship. For whilst the priest performs the sacrificial action according to the sacred rite, the people who assist follow each their own devotion, and are not tied to the words and actions of the priest. As Mary and John stood by the Cross, and beheld the Lord crucified, and heard His supplications to the Father for our pardon, reconciliation and peace; so each one has his own light, his own feelings, his own devotion, his own mode of view, his own spirit, his own way of prayer and inspiration of heart, his own fruit of grace through the sacrifice of our Lord at whose renewal he assists.

When St. John saw his vision of heaven, he beheld it in that order in which the Church on earth assists at the Holy Sacrifice, yet transformed with glory, and blessed with the open vision of her mysteries. He beholds the throne of God; and before the throne the golden altar; and upon the altar the seven golden candlesticks; and behind the altar one like to the Son of God, in a white garment and a girdle of gold, for He is the Bishop of

souls. Beneath the altar are the souls of the martyrs slain for the testimony. By the altar is the Book of mysteries. Upon the altar stands the Lamb as it were for ever slain. Around the altar are the seats of the twenty-four presbyters who assist the sacrificing Bishop, who is like to the Son of God. And there stand the great congregation of saints, in their several orders and ranks, the martyrs, the virgins, the confessors of the faith, and the vast multitude. And they sing the canticle of God and the Lamb: "The Lamb that was slain is worthy to receive power, and divinity, and wisdom, and strength, and glory, and benediction." And to the Lamb, when, as at the sacrifice, He opens the Book of mysteries, they sing: "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: because Thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us in Thy blood, out of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation. And hast made us to our God a kingdom and priests, and we shall reign upon the earth."

This is the kingdom of God. The kingdom of Christ in heaven is the transformation of the kingdom of Christ on earth. On earth He reigns over His own in the word of truth, and in His Eucharistic presence. In heaven He reigns in the open light of truth, for "there is no sun or moon, but the Lamb is the light thereof." And He reigns in His open presence, where all the blessed behold Him in the glory of His Godhead, and in the full stature of His glorious manhood; from which every saint has received the fruits of his redemption, and has drunk from it as the fountain of immortal life. Here, then, we reach the full measure of man's dignity. The perfect man, as St. Paul tells us, is he who has reached the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

LECTURE XIV.

FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE END OF MAN.

"Thou wast cast upon the face of the earth in the abjection of thy soul, in the day that thou wast born. And passing by thee, I saw that thou wast trodden under foot in thy blood; and I said to thee when thou wast in thy blood: Live. Yes, I said to thee: Live, thou that art in thy blood. . . . And I washed thee with water, and I cleansed away thy blood; and I anointed thee with oil. And I clothed thee with embroidery. . . . Thou wast clothed with fine linen, and embroidered work, and many colours; thou didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil, and wast made exceeding beautiful. And thy renown went forth among the nations for thy beauty; for thou wast perfect through my beauty, which I had put upon thee saith the Lord."—EZECHIEL xvi. 5–14.

IN the opening picture of this divine parable every Christian may contemplate his own portrait as he first appeared in this world. Fear precedes his birth. Pain and distress attended his coming to the light. His first infant cries proclaimed his sufferings. Clothed in the blood of the fallen Adam, his trembling dawn of life brings with it such a state of want, and such a cry of helplessness, that the heart of every beholder is moved to compassion. The poor little body is in want of everything, and can provide for nothing. The tender soul, fresh from its Creator's hand, is immersed in that fragile body, and is become an abject under the mortal sensibilities that quiver in the feeble earthly frame, still ignorant of what she is, still ignorant of her eternal destiny. Can this be the original state in which God created man? Can this represent the condition in which God originally designed that man should come into the world? Assuredly not, for everything about the new-born child proclaims its descent from an ancestor who has fallen from good to evil, from an ancestor whose blood is attainted because of treason against the Sovereign of the universe. The first things that appear in the offspring of Adam are abjection, defilement, and suffering, and the signs of

the presence of moral disorder quickly follow. For the animal is dominant over the spiritual man, the inferior controls the superior nature from the first instant of personal life, whilst reason sleeps a profound sleep within the soul, and conscience, as the witness of God, is silent in the heart, until reason dawns to awaken its power by degrees.

The child passes its earliest years under the exclusive influence of its animal senses and instincts, that spring from the tainted blood of Adam, whilst the soul that comes with the body into the world is an alien from God and from His grace, and is trodden under the malignant influence of God's enemy and ours. Can we possibly imagine the spiritual image of God removed to a greater distance from God than in this state of unregenerated infancy? Is it possible to conceive the beginning of an intelligent creature in a lower or more abject condition? The soul is in want of everything, and the body is in want of everything. Through long years must the child be dependent on the care of others for every want of the body, and every instruction of the soul, that infancy may be advanced to youth, and youth to manhood; that the mind may be opened to light and intelligence; that the sensual instincts may give way to the moral sense, and the moral sense be brought into discipline.

"Thou wast cast upon the face of the earth in the abjection of thy soul, in the day that thou wast born, and passing by thee I saw that thou wast trodden in thy blood." God came to us when estranged from Him, when cast out from our inheritance, when trodden down in the guilty blood derived from Adam. He came as one passing by, because we knew Him not, yet He cannot forget the creature made to His image. He reprobates the evil that deforms His image, and estranges His creatures from Him, but loves the good that still remains, and that, however defiled, is still undestroyed. Nor will God abandon His own divine plan, or suffer His adversary to destroy His work beyond all power of reparation. He beholds that power of memory created to receive His eternal light; He beholds that power of understanding made for the purpose of entering into His divine truth; He looks to that will that He created with a free and generous capacity to love Him as the Supreme and Eternal Good. He beholds that soul which He created with that trinity of powers, in disorder and division, and turned away from

Him, yet still capable of being brought back to order, turned to truth and restored to justice; still capable through His divine gifts of being united with Him in the bond of eternal love.

Man may forget God and the glorious end of his creation, but God cannot forget the intelligent creature whom He had so wonderfully made, and made with so much love, and for an end so perfect. His Eternal Word therefore came in a most beautiful humanity, established us in kindred with Him, and by a new and most pure generation made us the heirs of His blood and of His life. That he should come to our nature was no descent, because He encompasseth every creature; but when He took our human nature to His own divine personality He bridged over the infinite distance between His divinity and our humanity, and in that humanity he descended into the lowest depths of creation, where He found nothing but blindness to restore to sight, misery to redeem, and iniquity to repair with justice.

The child that comes into this world stands in need of another life beyond this mortal existence. Without this second life from God, the first derived from man leaves the soul without her reason of existence, and without the means of accomplishing the object for which she came into this world. To be made for God, and yet have no just and due relations with God, is to be in a position that is utterly false and unmeaning. To have our desires centred on one's self, when the true centre of our life is in God, is to be in a state of existence which is altogether perverse and absurd. Until this evil state derived from Adam is removed, and until the elements of a divine life are planted in us, to draw us from the false to the true centre of light, there is nothing either in the child or in the man that can establish us in just order, either with God or within ourselves. Every Christian child has therefore two beginnings of life, of which the first is natural, and is derived from Adam, and the second is supernatural, and derived from Christ.

It is this second and supernatural life which commands our utmost faith and gratitude, the giving of which is so impressively described in the divine parable of the prophet Ezechiel: "And I said to thee when thou wast in thy blood: Live. Yes, I said to thee: Live, thou that art in thy blood. . . . And I washed thee with water, and I cleansed away thy blood; and I anointed thee with oil, and I clothed thee with embroidery. . . . Thou wast clothed with fine linen, and embroidery, and many colours; thou

didst eat fine flour, and honey, and oil, and wast made exceeding beautiful. For thou was perfected through my beauty, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord." The redeeming, the restoring, and the clothing of man with a divine life and beauty, is the work of God through the Divine Incarnation. But the very nature of the Divine Incarnation implies that the whole man requires to be healed and restored. "The word was made flesh and dwelt among us." Evil came to man in a corporal shape, and passed through his senses to his soul. It is because the soul is immersed in her corporal senses, and is thereby prompted to self-love, and pride, and sensuality, that she has become alienated from God. The flesh lusts against the spirit, and makes the spirit turn from God to inferior things with a love of preference that fills her with disorder. Whoever does not understand this, can never understand the full meaning of the Incarnation as it brings God to us both in body and in spirit, nor why the principle of the divine Incarnation should be continued in the Sacraments, which are given to both the body and the soul. Christ acts through His visible Church, which is His mystical body, both in the delivery of His word and of His sacraments externally, whilst He conveys the light of His truth and the grace of the sacraments to the soul internally.

The body is washed with living water, and the soul is purified. The body is signed with the saving Cross in the name of the Holy Trinity, and the soul is restored to the likeness of the Holy Trinity. The body is anointed, and the soul is strengthened. The body is clothed in white to express the inward clothing of the soul with the supernatural light of faith, and with the rectifying grace of justice, and with the graces of the virtues, that when cultivated they may beautify the soul as with an embroidery work of many colours. Faith opens the way to God, hope aspires to God, and charity unites the soul with God. The divine seed of these virtues is committed to the infant soul, where in secret and silence it awaits a devout and holy cultivation. The child of Adam has become the child of God, and an immortal food, full of life, strength, and sweetness, awaits the soul of that child until it reaches the age of active reason, faith, and responsibility. "Thou wast perfect through my beauty, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord."

This regenerated child, with its hidden treasures, God commits

to the care and responsibility of its parents, whom He made the authors of its first life, that they might guard the second, and might be to that child as His visible providence. To them He has committed the sacred duty of first opening the mind of their child both to the light of reason and the light of faith. The Christian child is not only a member of the family, but a member of the Church and body of Christ, and, as God's representative, the Church has her solemn duties towards that child, which can only be accomplished through the co-operation of its parents or guardians.

Of the two orders of gifts with which God has endowed this child, the divine is given to exalt and perfect the natural, and to bring the whole man into communion with God. The natural order must, therefore, be so cultivated as to bring it under the effectual influence of the supernatural order of gifts, and the supernatural order of gifts must be so cultivated as to accomplish the divine intentions. To reverse this order of things in the training of infancy and youth, to put the natural before the supernatural, and man above God, to fill the mind with human notions to the exclusion of divine truth, and the heart with human motives to the exclusion of divine intentions, is to subvert the nature of things, to reverse the eternal order of justice, and to put the inconstant things of time before the unchangeable goods of eternity.

Woe, then, to the parents, woe to the teachers, and woe to the blind politicians, who look only to the natural and forget the divine elements implanted in the children of God; who devote all culture to the child of nature, and have little or no consideration for the child of grace. In neglecting the principles of divine justice they are destroying the foundations of human justice, and preparing the way for every domestic and social disorder. For all human justice rests ultimately on the conscience, as the conscience rests on God; and whoever is not well trained in his duties to God, can never be expected to be well trained in his duties to man. It is like cultivating the weeds and neglecting the corn; it is the making a wilderness of opinions through which the soul of man can find no way to God, left as he is amidst the perplexity of human opinions, and starved in soul for the want of spiritual nourishment.

The education of man begins with his birth, and only terminates

with his mortal life, for the whole of this life is but an education for eternity. Happy is he who considers this great truth with intelligence, and takes the whole course of God's divine providence for his instructor; who forgets not the past in the present, and from the present and past draws lessons for the future; and who, living in the presence of God, is ever subject to His discipline, and is guided by the providential manifestations of His will. Such a one is always learning in the school where God has placed him, and is always making some advancement in the fulfilment of justice. He looks back upon his origin, and finds himself the work of God upon the verge of nothingness. He recalls his infancy and youth, and finds himself at first altogether helpless and dependent, then wayward and thoughtless, and still dependent upon the labours, lights and solicitudes of maturer heads and minds; whilst his maturer years depend in a thousand ways on the good providence of God. Let him distinguish what he has received from what he has not received, and he will find nothing to claim as from his own fountain but the acts of his own will; let him distinguish between the good and evil in the acts of his will, and he will find that the motive power of his good will comes of the light and grace of God, although the choice be his own, whilst his evil thoughts and acts alone are purely his own. This is that separation of the precious from the vile which makes the man sincere and truthful, and, as the prophet says, "like the mouth of God." It will teach him the great lesson, that whilst in doing evil he sinks into his own weakness, in doing or receiving good he has but followed the good that God in his divine providence has put before him.

If he turn from the exterior world into his own interior, he will there meet with wonders that are constantly increasing, and to which he can find no termination. For although on our material side we everywhere meet with limitation, on our spiritual side, where God holds communion with us, we find His unchangeable truth without bounds or limits; and His unchangeable justice speaking ever with His voice. What an endowment is the light of reason, in which all men see the same principles of truth and justice, and to which all men are equally subject. What an incomparably greater endowment does the same soul receive, when the light of faith descends upon the light of reason and the man is brought into the higher sphere of light, in which God is more nearly seen, and His eternal mysteries are revealed to us. Nothing more com-

pletely shows what man is of himself, and what by the gift of God. The man of faith is the friend of God, and is made partaker of His secrets. "I call you not servants but friends," said our Lord to His Apostles, "because all things whatsoever I have heard from My Father I have made known to you."

We receive two kinds of light, the one corporal, the other mental: the one given to the eyes of the body, the other to the eyes of the soul. The corporal light is a resplendent image of the spiritual light. The two small eyes that are set in our face have no proportion whatever to the vast prospect of earth and heaven that we are enabled to see through them. Compared with the vastness of their objects, our eyes are as nothing. But the eyes are only the instrument, the power of vision is in the soul. How is the vision accomplished? Through the gift of light. But that light is no part of our nature; it is external to us, and we are subject to its influence. It is the medium which God has provided for bringing the forms of all visible things through our eyes to our mind. We can never confound the source of that light with ourselves. The source of that light is the sun, which God has placed at a distance from us so remote as to exceed the power of imagination to represent that distance to us. Yet from that distant source of light we receive the power of vision, and warmth, and fostering strength to our earthly frame. Were God to remove the sun from the sphere in which it acts, we must pine away, and perish in darkness.

The material sun is the visible symbol of the Eternal Word of God, who is the Sun of all intelligences, and who sends forth His light and His truth to all minds. "That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world." For the light that makes God known is from God, the light that manifests eternal principles is from eternity. Not that whilst we are in this world we can see the truth in God, even by the light of faith, and much less by the light of reason, for that would be to see God, which is reserved for the life to come. We do not even see the created sun in Himself, but only in certain rays of His light, as they are reflected and tempered by the atmosphere of this world through which they pass. Yet they make the sun known to us, through its action reflected upon us. So have we received into our minds a certain reflection and participation of the light of eternal and unchangeable truth, tempered indeed to the feebleness of our nature, but revealing to us its Divine Author.

This is that "bread of intellect" with which our minds are fed, even as the air feeds our bodies with its vital fire. Yet the distance in communication between God the Eternal Truth and the created intellect of the natural man is infinite; and he receives but the luminous shadows and remote images of that essential truth. Pale and slender is the ray of rational light that reaches the understanding of the carnal man, whose mind is absorbed in earthly pursuits, or obscured by the turbid influence of his sensuous appetites and impassioned instincts. Wisdom he has not, because his heart is not touched with the light or moved with the sense of eternal good.

"When we know anything for certain," observes St. Thomas, "it is from the light of reason that we know it, from that light which is divinely implanted in our soul, and by which God speaks to us."* "The natural reason," he says elsewhere, "is nothing less than the divine brightness reflected in us."† This light of reason, he says again, acts as a universal cause, and is reflected in our mind as the moon reflects the sun, or, more truly, as the solar rays are reflected through the atmosphere from the objects on which they alight. We thus see the truth, as St. Bonaventure remarks, through the medium of the creature as through a mirror, not seeing the substance but the images of things.

But the light of faith is a more direct light, which more clearly reveals to us the Divine Author of that light, and those divine truths beyond the reach of our natural light which He would have us to know and believe. And although obscurely seen as through a glass, they are most certain, as well because of the divine source from which they emanate, as from the divine authority on which they rest, and because they receive a certain illumination of divine light in the mind endowed with the gift of faith.

St. John tells us in the beginning of his Gospel that the Eternal Word of God is the giver of the light of reason as well as of the light of faith. Of that Eternal Word he says that "all things were made by Him; and without Him was made nothing that was made. In Him was life, and the life was the light of men; and the light shone in darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it. . . . . That was the true light, which enlighteneth every man that cometh into this world. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not." Thus far the

* S. Thoma, *De Veritate*, q. i. a. 1. † Id. in *Psalm* xxxvi.

Apostle speaks of the light with which all men are enlightened, but with a light insufficient to reveal to them the Eternal Word as the author of their light. Then he speaks of the same Eternal Word as the author of the light and grace of faith through his divine Incarnation: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we saw His glory, the glory as it were of the only begotten of the Father) full of grace and truth. . . . . And of His fulness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the Law was given by Moses; grace and truth came by Jesus Christ."

What is the darkness into which the light of intelligence shines, but which knows not the Divine Author of its light? There are many degrees of this darkness. There is the darkness of the subjective man, who would be in utter darkness were it not for the light of reason which the Eternal Word planted in his soul at her creation. There is the darkness, again, of which St. Paul speaks, the darkness of the animal man, who turns from God to live on himself, and whose light is clouded by his pride and sensuality. There is the darkness of those, again, who are wilfully dark, and who, like the tempters of Susannah, look down upon the earth that they may not see God. Then there is the darkness of those many souls who will not look beyond their natural light, and care not for the divine light that reveals the mysteries of God and of the soul. Finally, there is the thick darkness of those souls that confound the objective light of truth with their own subjective darkness, as though they were themselves the authors of their light, the givers and not the receivers of truth; in a word, as if they were the sun, and not merely the intelligent eye that receives the light of the sun.

It is the truth of truths to know the Divine Author and Giver of our light. And this knowledge is the foundation of that intellectual humility which makes the soul sincere and just in obeying the truth, and in feeling her own littleness in the presence of the truth, whose foundation is in God. For "whatever is true," as St. Augustine observes, "is derived from the Truth. And a soul is only a soul in so far as she is a true soul. Each soul derives it from the truth that she is a soul. But truth cannot admit falsehood, yet the soul does admit falsehood, and that often. Whatever truth, therefore, a soul may have, she does not obtain that truth from herself. God is truth, and it is from God that the soul obtains

the truth that makes her a rational soul."* Truth has, therefore, the right to command the soul, whilst the soul has no right to command or evade the truth. But the man who is sunk in sensual affections cannot lift up his eyes to contemplate the spiritual light of truth, and the world addicted to carnal cupidities is like the man whose eyes are too weak to look into the sunlight.

We may sum up what we have said of the great and beautiful gift of spiritual light in the words of St. Gregory Nazianzen, who is called the Theologian by eminence : "Great, many and unspeakable," he says, "are the things which we now receive or shall receive from God. But the greatest and most benignant of all is our attraction to unite with Him. What the sun is to the things of sense, that God is to the things that we understand in our minds by reason. As the sun visits our eyes in such a way as to enable us to behold his light, so God renders our mind divine. The sun strengthens our eyes to see, and causes all visible things to be seen ; and in like manner does God bring to all minds the power to understand, and gives to all intelligible things the power to be understood, whilst He is Himself the summit of all intelligible things, and in Him all desire ends and is at peace, because there is nothing beyond. However wise, however high, however inquiring the mind of man may be, it neither has, nor can have, an object more sublime than God. He is the supreme of all desirable things, and when we have come to Him all anxious questioning is at an end. The man who breaks through the earth that weighs upon him, and dispels the clouds of sense with the help of reason and contemplation, is the man who seeks God, and seeks the illumination of his soul in His most pure light. This man is twice blessed—he is blessed by being raised on high, and he is helped in having his soul made conformable with the Divinity ; and he draws towards that unity which he contemplates in the Holy Trinity. But although the man that cleaves to his fleshly senses and clings to his clay, had his beginning from God, and is called to ascend on high, yet he debases himself below what he is, and will neither direct his mind to the rays of truth, nor ascend above these baser things. But of this man I say, that although everything in this world were to follow his will, he would still be wretched in his blindness, and the more his earthly prosperity deludes him, the

* St. August. *De Diversis Questionibus*, q. i.

more wretched he will be. He only plucks the bad fruit of evil opinion to be punished with darkness, and will find that the God whom he has not learnt to know in the light of truth, is a consuming fire."*

One or two sentences more from the Eminent Theologian. "That reason," he says, "which is divinely implanted in all minds, and that primal law which is inserted and woven into the bosom of all mortals, is that which raises us up from visible things to God. No man knows, or will ever know, what God is in His own essence and nature; but to my thinking, we shall know what is like to God in ourselves; our mind and reason will be united with Him whose likeness we are, and the image of God will be raised into the presence of the original, with whose desire our soul is touched, and then we shall know even as we are known. Yet what reaches us in this life is but a little streamlet, but a feeble ray of that great light."†

We may now draw out the duty of the will towards the truth in the words of one whom the Greeks look upon as the successor of St. Gregory Nazianzen. "Beware," says Simeon, the Junior Theologian, "beware, thou illuminated soul, whom Christ hath illuminated, that the light which comes to thee, comes by a secret path that is not visible to mortal eyes. Take it not for thy own; ascribe it not to thyself, lest it be taken from thine eyes, and thou return to darkness. For neither God nor his light is visible to the senses. His light is seen in its effects. But you may know how far you are illuminated, if you only consider how far you have a meek and humble heart; for you are illuminated as far as you are humble, and no further. The reason of this is, that the soul advances in light as far only as she advances in humility; and the pontiffs of wisdom declare that the knowledge of humility and meekness is the knowledge of God and of self. For the soul that has been divinely visited is peaceful and gentle."‡

Nothing in this world is so marvellous as the transformation that a soul undergoes when the light of faith descends upon the light of reason. It is like the sunlight coming upon the moonlight, and dissipating a thousand shadows and delusions. The soul is lifted into a higher sphere, finds herself in a new

* S. Greg. Nazian. *Orat.* 21. † Id. *Orat.* 34.
‡ Simeon Jun. Theolog. *Orat.* 1. In Bib. Max. Patrum.

element, and sees from a new principle, resting her mind upon the mind of God, and not upon her own. Faith gives to her a new faculty, which rises above the faculties of her nature, though in complete accordance with them. The light of faith may approach by degrees, or it may come suddenly like the sunburst from the cloud; but there is a moment when all things are changed to the soul, and with a certainty inspiring a confidence that the light and authority of God alone can give. The memory, the understanding, the natural reason itself, are pervaded by this supernatural light, and the will is illuminated with its lustre. It claims to rule our nature, as what is divinely superior rules what is naturally inferior. Yet, so far from oppressing our liberty, the opening to our mind and heart of such a high and heavenly order of truth and motive, enlarges our freedom of interior action beyond all that we could have previously imagined. The light of faith not only reveals the heavenly world to us, and brings its power within us; but it illuminates all earthly truth, and the higher knowledge of God gives us the deeper knowledge of ourselves. The heavenly mysteries seem to draw nigh to us, because we are drawn towards them, and in their light the value of all things is changed, and in many things reversed. So true are the words of St. Paul, that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature."

Where faith presents us with the truth, there is no more question of opinions, or of the judgments of the natural man, with their doubtings, hesitatings, and waverings; but as we only require light or authority to know the facts of this world, so we only require supernatural light and authority to know the great truths of Christianity, all of which are facts, and facts to faith so certain and undeniable, that with every increase of light, and every new instruction from that authority with which Christ has deposited His truth, those divine facts grow more firm and clear to the mind, are seen in greater profundity and in a more beautiful harmony with each other; whilst each particular truth gives light to all the rest, because all are essentially one and indivisible in the mind of God.

Man is therefore the recipient of truth and the subject of truth, not only of natural truth, but of divine truth. And this truth purifies his mind from darkness and error. But we have shown in a previous lecture that he is also the subject of justice, and

that the light of justice comes to him with the light of truth, and is contained in that light, and expresses the esssential order of things. When the mind is purified, elevated, and made sincere towards God in the eternal truth, and the will is made conformable with the divine justice, the soul is prepared for union with God as the Supreme Good, from whom that divine light of truth and justice is received. The divine truth and justice are therefore the first objects that reach the faithful soul, revealing to her that Supreme Good which is the final object of the soul, and which is the reward of her fidelity to truth and justice. But to be the subjects of this heavenly light implies that we live in subjection to its divine influence, and this subjection constitutes us in the fundamental virtue of humility.

The communicating of the light of divine truth and justice is far, however, from being the whole account of what God does for the faithful soul. The nature of man is too far from God, too near to nothingness, and the natural will too weak and disproportionate, to rise of its own strength to things divine. The will must be purified from the injustice through which it turns from God, and must receive the grace of justice by which to return to God. The soul must receive a divine strength by which she may ascend to the truth and justice of God, a strength to enable the will to cleave to God through the light of His truth and justice in faith, hope, and charity. This is that healing, strengthening, and sanctifying grace which the subject soul receives through the infinite merits of the Incarnation and Sacrifice of our Lord Jesus Christ. But as every increase of natural strength gives greater freedom to the will, how much more must the gift of divine strength increase its power and give it greater freedom.

To give us the certain and visible proof that we are subject to God, and that we really receive His truth and His grace, Christ established His Church, and made it one as He is one, and in His Church He deposited His authority, the principle of unity, His truth, His sacraments, and His judicial power, that through a human ministry His divine gifts might flow to men in a human open and visible way, as well as in a divine and interior way; that there might be outward and visible security for His inward and invisible gifts, and that His kingdom might hold together in a visible obedience to God. Thus God gives the interior light, whilst man gives the exterior instruction; God gives the interior

grace, whilst man presents the visible sacraments; God gives the grace to obey, whilst man enforces the precepts of justice. And by the Divine ordination, resting ever on the authority of Christ, in obeying the authority of the Church we obey the voice of God.

To form a sound judgment, therefore, of any one's position with respect to the true and just order of things, and to take the measure of his moral stature, everything may be reduced to two points. The first is his sincerity towards the truth given to his mind and conscience, and the justice with which his will acts upon that sincerity. But this sincerity requires that he make the truthful distinction between what he is as the recipient of God's gifts, whether they be the gifts of His providence or the gifts of His grace; between what we are, in a word, from the gifts of God, and what by the conduct of our will amidst those gifts. The second is the position which we hold with respect to God as the final end and object of our life; and what progress we have made through the use of the divine gifts towards that divine and eternal good for which we were brought into existence.

But this sincerity with God and with self, the justice with which we act upon this sincerity, and the progress we make towards God, all which depend on our subjection to God and to His gifts, are founded in the virtue of humility. This humility is the matrix, the subjective and susceptive disposition of the soul, into which the light and grace of God, which are the seminal principles of the spiritual virtues, are received. It is the receptive disposition of the soul made pure by the sincerity of justice, and capacious to receive, and subject to God that it may receive, His divine gifts. This disposition of the soul is itself a grace, and the disposer of the soul for the more positive graces. To borrow the words of Hugo of St. Victor: In humility is the principle of life because it subjects us to the Giver of Life; whilst pride is the cause of ruin, because it takes us away from the Giver of Life. The Scriptures therefore strive in all their pages to convince mankind that humility is the first good of man, and that pride is the root of all evils. They are both of them amazingly fertile, each is visible in its fruits, and each in its own way exerts a prodigious influence upon the state and condition of man.

Consider them as two trees whose roots are planted in different human hearts, and observe the astonishing difference between

their respective growths, and how different is the character of their fruits. Each grows through the moral man, of whose heart it has taken possession. They are not merely of different but of opposite qualities, for one is the root of humility and the other is the root of pride. The one produces the fruit of life and the other the fruit of death. The one fruit is transparent with lucid sincerity, the other is dull and dark with egotistical error. The one grows heavenward and seeks the light, the other grows earthward and seeks the gloom. The one is medicinal and heals the soul, the other is poisonous and destructive to the system. Each has found its congenial soil; for the root of pride is planted in the flesh, and the root of humility is planted in the spirit. No one has observed the different qualities of pride and humility more keenly than St. Paul, who never loses sight of them as the fontal sources of good and evil. The heart is the seat of appetite, and whichever of these two roots is there planted, it will determine the appetite for the fruit which it produces. For the old Adam in his pride sits at the root of the vicious tree, whilst the New Adam, Christ, with His humility, holds possession of the spiritual tree. Compare these two trees in their roots, branches, and fruits, and then choose which of the two you prefer to have planted in your nature.

It is the character of pride to be self-sufficient, to be independent of the greater good, to trust in self as though self were the greater good, to draw all things to self, and to measure all things by the man's imagination rather than by God's truth. Pride is self-opinionated, and hard to believe, and is haughty, and sensitive when touched by the truth, and jealous, and unbending, and uncharitable. It judges, and will not be judged; it exacts obedience unreasonably, and will not reasonably obey. Pride is ever aspiring to exalt the man on false motives, to a false position, and on false pretensions. It is a swelling and not a growth, because it ever confounds the hollow capacity for good with the good which ought to fill that capacity, but this good the proud man will not humble himself to receive. It is the delight of the proud man to be thought happy, whilst far from the good that makes man happy. It is the delight of the polished man to cover his pride that it may not be seen. And it is the delight of the vain and vulgar man to proclaim that he has no pride, unconscious of the gross pride that he reveals.

But the virtue of humility is the procreative foundation of all the virtues. It opens the soul to God in the sincere knowledge of her wants, and in the sincere trust that God will give to her petitions that of which she is in want, and the humble soul is reverential in the sense of her dependence on God. This is the reason why God "gives His grace to the humble," and why He "resists the proud;" why He "knows the proud afar off, and the humble near at hand." It is also the reason why "he who humbles himself shall be exalted." The first of the virtues that comes to humility is faith, and "without faith it is impossible to please God," for "the just man lives by faith." Yet what will faith profit us unless we seek with hope what we know by faith? "We hope for that which we see not, we wait for it in patience." But in hoping we love what by faith we hold, and to hope comes charity. Thus faith working by love goes in a straight line to God as the true object of the soul. But how these three virtues which have God for their direct object are to be cultivated and followed, we learn from the virtue of prudence. Then justice gives the law for prudence to follow, and completes and adorns the three virtues that directly look to God. Fortitude protects, defends, and strengthens them; and that the virtues of the soul may not be choked with noxious weeds or with the overgrowth of poisonous things, and so become stunted in their growth, temperance is there to keep away or remove whatever might be injurious to their free growth and expansion. When, therefore, the three theological virtues are engrafted into the receptive root of humility, and the four cardinal virtues are added to them, these virtues bring to them in addition the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost, which are the richest fruits that they can bear. And by their efficacy the conspiracy of the vices is broken up, the corporation of the devil is dissolved, and the Divine Fountain of all the virtues will be reached in safety.

If you set opposite qualities against each other, those qualities will be strongly impressed upon your mind. Put black against white, folly against wisdom, or pride against humility, and the nature of each will come out in the most vivid contrast. Apply this method to the fruits of these two trees. After you have once tasted the sweetness of humility, you will find that there is nothing so bitter as the fruits of pride, which are not only bitter but destructive to the soul. But if you have ever been the

victim of pride, and have got free from that ruinous evil, you will find from what a malignant root you have parted, and how wonderfully sweet and unexpectedly abundant is the peace that comes to you with holy humility. If, then, you have the good desire to have the peace of the virtues rather than the fury of the vices, you will do well to trace them one by one to their root; because then the whole secret of their triumph will come out; you will find that secret in the fundamental grace of humility, and that the theological virtues which seek God, and the cardinal virtues which rule the man, rest upon this virtue as its crown.*

If these Lectures have taught you anything to the purpose, they will have shown you that this virtue of humility rests upon the very nature of things, and has the whole breadth, and height, and profundity of truth, both human and divine, for its foundations. They will also have pointed out, or left to your inference, that nothing can be more reasonable, nothing more just, nothing more consonant with all truth, than that a man should bear himself with sincere humility, both as the disciple of truth and as the subject of God's gifts.

The parable of the mustard-seed may be taken in its small beginning as the parable of creation, and its glorious growth from so small a germ as the parable of divine providence. For although it refers immediately to the beginning and growth of the Church, the same law of great growth from small beginnings through the gifts of God, belongs to the order of nature as well as to the order of grace. But whatever growth we individually receive, we can never forget our feeble origin; our earthly life is too short, and we have too many examples of like beginnings around us, to allow of such forgetfulness. Our actual advancement from such a poor beginning is a parable again of future things. For if our present existence is wonderful as compared with our first existence, if we have already received such an expansion, and that so much greater through the gifts of God on our intellectual and spiritual side than on our earthly side; what may we expect from the promises of God for the life to come, whose shadows are already upon us, provided we fulfil the divine conditions which we know so well.

To measure our being by the space we fill in this world would be too absurd to think of. The true measure of our being must be taken by the amount of truth with which the mind is united, and

* See Hugo de S. Victore, *De Fructibus Carnis et Spiritus.*

by the amount of life with which the soul is endowed. The great difference between man and man consists in their amount of spiritual power. For the mind grows on truth, and is greater in proportion to the grandeur and elevation of the truth of which it partakes ; and the soul increases in grandeur with the greatness and elevation of the good on which her love is fixed ; and she grows less in proportion as she sinks her affections down to things that are low and base.

We cannot think of material things without thinking of their limitations, because by their limitations they are chiefly known. What is greater than their limits is added by the mind, whose limits are of another order. In a statue we see nothing but the limits which the artist gives to the marble out of which he gets the form of man by limiting the block of stone, and what else there is, is supplied by the mind of the beholder. Who can tell the mystery of space? All we can say is, that it is the local limitation of the material creature, and that time is the measure of the flight of mortal life. Hence St. Paul calls time momentary, and the creature next to nothingness. But the soul holds communion with what is infinite and eternal. It is no wonder, therefore, that those who give their minds to nothing but what belongs to time and space, find life a great perplexity.

If we reflect how time affects us under different conditions, we shall find how intimately it is connected with ourselves. When much occupied with ourselves, we find that time goes long and heavily with us. The weariness of sickness, of a period of inward trouble, or of disappointed expectation is proverbial. The weariness of idleness is not in any way less effective in causing us to feel the burden of time. Why is this but because we are thrown upon ourselves, and self is wearisome. But whenever we are absorbed in some great objective truth, affection, or interest, that carries one away from oneself, we not only find the time short, but are often unconscious of its passage. Well known is the Eastern legend of the hermit who upset his jar of water at the instant he was rapt in the contemplation of eternal things. On returning to himself he thought his mind had been away for a thousand years, but he found that the water had not yet all run out of the jar. Equally well known is the legend of the monk who, whilst contemplating in the woods, heard the eternal song. On returning from his rapture to himself, he thought he had been but a moment or two, but on

returning to his monastery, he found that all was changed. No one knew him, and he knew no one. But on referring to the registers, they found there had been a monk of his name and description long years ago. These legends are attractive because they put a profound truth in a striking way. The one took the measure of time from the great things he beheld, and the other was so rapt away from himself as to be unconscious of time. Leaving legends for authentic facts, one has known holy souls so absorbed in the contemplation of God as to be altogether unconscious of time and place, until the call of duty brought them back to themselves. When engaged with ourselves we are less happy, or altogether unhappy; when occupied with some great object we are more happy; but when absorbed in God we are altogether happy. What greater proof can we have of the truth, that man is a subject only, and not an object to himself, and that he is made for an infinite and eternal object.

But this subject bears the image of God, and in that image there is a certain reflection of God, a certain shadow of His eternal truth, and a certain consciousness of the divine presence as well as of the divine law and will. In these lights he has a certain knowledge of a Being who is infinite, eternal, unchangeable, and perfect, whose subject he is. And he knows, or ought to know, that all the unchangeable forms of truth, justice, beauty, and goodness present at any time in his mind, have their origin in God, and not in himself, or in any creature; because these are unchangeable and the creature is changeable; because these are eternal and the creature is of time; because these are not limited to space, and the creature of this world is limited to space. But the more we adhere to the unchangeable truth and will of God, the less changeable we are, and the less conscious of the burden of time. We are the stronger, better and happier, because we are nearer the source of strength and happiness, closer to our real good, closer to the divine object for which we are created, and farther from our self, for which we were not created. St. Augustine understood this when he said: "Join thyself to eternity, and thou shalt find rest." For the more our spirit is united with eternal things, the more we reflect the unchangeable peace of eternity, and the less subject we are to the fretful things of time.

Whilst we are so much limited on our sensual side, we are unlimited on our spiritual side, in that degree at least in which we deny ourselves to our sensual side. From our spiritual side we

communicate with eternal and infinite things. This is the reasonable ground of that law of self-denial and mortification which the Son of God has given us, and which as the perfect man He practised. But this denial of our inferior nature is exercised in three ways: by refusing ourselves beyond what is needful to our sensual appetites, by holding the passions of our nature under firm control, and by abstracting the soul from them through the active communion of the mind and will with divine and eternal things.

Let us return to the grain of mustard-seed, to the law of the first beginning. What parent ever took the trembling mystery of infancy to his breast without feeling how poor and feeble is the origin of man? The first dawn of human life is nothing but animal instinct and vegetable life. The soul created in that animal frame is still enfolded with its light, as the rosebud in its green and tender leaves. How has the body grown from its germinal existence to its state of vigorous maturity? Unless God had provided the inexhaustible resources of His providence, it must have perished. Every mother might repeat the words of the brave mother of the Machabees, when she exhorted her seven children to die for the law of God: "I know not how you were formed in the womb, for I neither gave you breath, nor soul, nor life, neither did I frame the limbs of each one of you."

Think of your long dependence on your mother's love and care. You grew at her breast; your affections were opened by the outpourings of her own; your mind was awakened to its first acts by her tender babblings; and she brought your tongue to speak. Upon the mother's care came the father's authority, and your subjection to your parents prepared and disposed you for your subjection to God, whom they first taught you to know. This is the wonderful moment of transition from earthly to heavenly beginnings, when the light of reason begins to dawn, and when with the light of reason dawns the light of grace. The mother points to heaven with gentle words, and the child begins to know that heavenly Father to whom the little hands and eyes are lifted up in the first simple accents of prayer. What can be more beautifully ordered than this carrying up of love and duty from our earthly parents to our heavenly Father, from whom they descend anew with greater strength towards those earthly parents by whom they were first awakened. The long years of growth and consequent dependence assigned to man, as compared with the

rapid maturity of the irrational animals, shows how much he has to acquire as an intelligent being; and the length of his pupilage is divinely ordained that the dependence of his nature may be deeply imprinted upon him, and that he may be trained to that life-long obedience which he owes to God.

How have you reached your manhood? The mere history of your corporal nourishment is most wonderful. It has come to you from all climes, and has engaged the industry of many races of men. Thousands of your fellow-creatures have contributed their toils, cares, perils, and sufferings under the overruling providence of God, to build up your body to the vigour of manhood. It were a goodly lesson to human conceit were you to meditate on the history of your clothing, shelter, diet, and personal comfort; and then on the providence of God, that beyond the intention of all these toiling and suffering creatures has brought the products of their labours to bear on your own well-being. Put all these means and external resources together, trace them to their several origins, and you will be amazed at the number and variety of causes, external to your own will, that God has brought into operation to make you what you are.

But if the earth has conspired with all its elements, and with the toils and labours of so many of God's creatures, to construct, nourish, and protect your mortal frame, heaven has sent forth its light, and God His graces, to develop and raise up your soul, that the image of God within you might ascend to His likeness. By the faith of your parents you were brought in your unconsciousness to the Church of God; your offences were removed, and you received the grace that inclines the soul to God. Thus was the image of God raised to His likeness, and the light of God's countenance was sealed upon you in the reception of faith, hope, and charity. As you were generated to Adam without your will, you were regenerated unto Christ without your will. As you contracted offence without your will, your offence was removed without your will.

And now began your training, both as the child of man and the child of God. Who shall tell the outward, and still less the inward, history of the opening of your mind to light and knowledge? How many minds, and how many facts, have helped you to this knowledge? But of what avail would all external help have been without the interior light of reason and faith, which

have never ceased to shine into your mind from God? Think for a moment how many minds in how many ages, nations, and conditions of life have contributed to the education of your mind and the storing of your memory. Who, again, shall tell the history of the forming of your heart to justice, duty, and generosity? What a narrative would that be that would tell the history in all its steps of the interior of one single Christian soul, through her conflicts of light with darkness, of grace with nature, of conscience with self, of humility with pride, from the first dawn of reason and active faith to the sanctified hour of her departure to God. This is the charm of the lives of the Saints, although so much of their interior history can never be known until it is revealed to us in heaven.

But in vain had been all teaching, in vain all the discipline of youth, without the light of God to see His truth, and the grace to will His law. Parents, pastors, and teachers may have done their part, but God gave them the light to teach, and gave us the light to understand; they were the instrument to develop the gifts of which God is the giver. What a gift is that of speech. What the body is to the soul, speech is to our intellectual light. It is the essential instrument both for apprehending and communicating truth, as well as the bond of social life and of social religion. It was given by God to the intelligence, and can only exist through intelligence. Through the gift of language we receive the revelations of God, the wisdom of past ages, the present communications of mind to mind, and the knowledge of what is distant from us in time and place. Through the gift of language we are able to know the course of God's providence through all the ages of the world. Through this gift all the traditions of past ages reach us in this present time, and every kind of knowledge both human and divine. As the body in due order is the obedient servant of the soul, speech in due order is the obedient servant of truth.

Looking to all these things, each of them seems to put St. Paul's question in its turn: "What hast thou which thou hast not received? And if thou hast received; why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not received?" These questions go to the very roots of good and evil. For both truth and justice require us to confess the gifts of God, and that we should not ascribe to ourselves what we receive from Him. But whoever is so far gone in pride as to ascribe to himself what he has received from God, has infected

his soul with a dark falsehood, and deformed his life with a deep injustice.

It is often said that all men have much in common, but in so far as the vision of the mind and the justice of the will is concerned, they are often as far from each other as though they were creatures of another kind, and lived in different worlds. What can be further asunder than the man who thinks in the light of God and the man who thinks only in the light of nature? What can be wider apart than the man whose will is centred on God and the man whose will is centred on himself? They differ from each other in the fundamental principles of life, thought, and conduct. Whilst the man of nature has the most contracted views of everything, the man of faith has an infinite prospect before his mind; whilst the natural man acts on the lowest motives, the man of faith is elevated by the highest motives of which an intelligent creature is capable. He thinks more from God's point of view than from his own, because this divine point of view has become his own; and thus he beholds even human affairs in the light of divine principles.

Let us not be deceived by our present confines and limitations. We already feel our capacity for eternal things, and whilst bound in body to the earth, we can ascend in mind to heaven. Our desires are in advance of our position, and we know that God is secretly with us. But every advancement towards the open possession of God involves the breaking down of our natural limitations, and this breaking through our limitations is always a surrender of self and a sacrifice. Through our birth from Adam we are in the bondage of Satan, and we are freed from that bondage through the regeneration of Christ. But though by His regeneration we are transferred into His kingdom, we are still in the bondage of ignorance. From this bondage we are set free through the labours of instruction. After the light of instruction has expanded the mind and made it free in the truth, we still find ourselves compressed and held under restraint by our bodily senses, and by that passionate egotism and concupiscence which fetter and clog the wings of the soul. Then comes the combat of the spirit against the flesh, and of the love of God against the love of self, a long and severe combat calling for self-denial, patience, and many sacrifices before the soul obtains the calm supremacy, and the body is reduced to subjection. When this deliverance is won,

it is only the first restoration to order, and the beginning of freedom. Every more earnest aspiration after God is a departure from that bondage which holds us in fetters to our self-seeking limits. Every new light from God breaks down something of the dark circle of ignorance by which we are imprisoned. If the soul ascends to a higher contemplation of eternal truth, she has parted with some of her earthly load, and has ascended into a diviner atmosphere. Whenever she courageously quits herself in the ventures of faith and hope, and casts her heart upon God as the fountain of her life, she breaks some invisible chain that held her to her native weakness. When she denies herself to herself that she may live to God, and love Him above all things and in all things; and when in the love of God she sacrifices her repose in the service of her neighbours, she habitually breaks away from the limits set to nature by self-love, and becomes enlarged in spirit, light, and grace, and free with that liberty with which God sets us free, extending herself ever more beyond her native confines. Finally, the mortal body is wholly sacrificed at the divine call, that the soul may pass to God.

We have considered the beginning and the midway of man; but the beginning is for the end, and the midway leads to the end. The beginning rests on creation, the midway rests on the divine providence, but the end of the just rests on God. Our great capacity as the image of God was given to us as our first preparation for our final end; the fundamental appetite of our soul for universal good was given to dispose us towards our final end; the supernatural light of faith is given to light us on the way to our final end; the law of eternal justice is given to rule us towards our final end; the grace of Christ is given us to strengthen our will to gain our final end; the gifts of the Holy Spirit are given to sanctify us for our final end. The creation makes God known to us, whilst it veils Him from our sight. And the more closely we question the creation, the more clearly it tells us that it is not our end, is not the universal good, but only an inferior and transient good, only a veil before the eternal good, unable to satisfy the soul of man, which is the image of God. All things in this world, in their right use, are for our final end, but our final end is for its own sake. Our beginning is full of solicitude, our midway is full of labour and care, but our final end has neither solicitude, nor labour, nor care. But the greater the love which

the soul has for God as her final end, the more rapid is her movement towards her final end. Love moves and intention guides her motion to the end of all her desire, and she is already in part possession, although not yet secure.

As all good is measured by its end, so all evil is measured by its end. For as there is a supreme end of all good which is so high that there is nothing above it, there is also an end of evil which is so base and low that there is nothing beneath it. Heaven is the summit of the good that reaches its end, and hell is the lowest descent of the evil that reaches its end. The end of the wicked who go on to their mortal end in wickedness is their utter failure from their final end, and the consummation of evil. God is their final end, but to God they can never come. With the God who is infinitely pure, just and holy, the defilement of what is unchangeably impure, unjust, and unholy, can never be united. The end of the wicked, says St. Paul, "is destruction;" and a destruction the more terrible because it is not the destruction of existence, since the soul is created immortal for immortal good; nor yet the end of evil, since the sinner would not change his evil will; but a destruction that brings the evil one to the last extremity of evil, which stands at the remotest distance from the final end of man. For as there is a Supreme end of good, in which the just man finds all the good for which he was created, there is an extreme end of evil prepared by the Eternal Justice for all unjust and perverted wills. But this is not the final end of man, which is the same for all, but the final loss of that end. In the words of Ecclesiasticus: "Every corruptible work shall fail in the end, and the worker thereof shall go with it." In the nature of things it must be so, and to ensure the just and essential order of things it cannot be otherwise.

"I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end, saith the Lord God, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty." In these words the Son of God proclaims that all things have their beginning through Him, and all things have their end in Him, to whom the Father hath delivered all things. As the Word of God He made all things, and enlightens all intelligences. As the Word Incarnate He bridged over the gulf of separation between God and the fallen creature. Through His sacrifice and resurrection He renewed all things, and opened the way of return through Himself for all mankind to God. He is

the Author and the End of the world and of the ages, of the law and the prophets, of the Gospel and the Church, and to all that are His He gives the beginning and the end of perfection. "He is the first and the last," says St. Ambrose, "the first because all things are through Him, the last because the resurrection is also through Him. He descended into this earth, and placed Himself beneath all, that He might lift up whatever was fallen."* As He is the renewer of all things, and the perfecter of whatever is perfected, He is likewise the judge of all, assigning his end to every one according to his works.

There is no beginning or end of God, and only with respect to us is this to be understood, that He is the Beginner of our nature, and the author of our grace, and the end of our faith and love. He is the beginner of our justification, and accomplishes our justification within us, and perfects our justification in heaven. Wherefore He concludes the whole course of His divine revelations with these words: "Behold I come quickly; and my reward is with me, to render to every man according to his works. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end. Blessed are they who wash their robes in the blood of the Lamb; that they may have a right to the tree of life, and may enter in by the gates of the city. Without are dogs, and sorcerers, and the unchaste, and murderers, and servers of idols, and every one that loveth and maketh a lie. I, Jesus, have sent my angel to testify to you these things in the churches. I am the root and stock of David, the bright and morning star. And the spirit and the bride say: Come. And he that heareth, let him say: Come. And he that thirsteth, let him come; and he that will, let him take the water of life freely."

When the just soul leaves the earth, and is purified from every stain, she is prepared for the vision of God. She will enter into the eternal region, where "there is no sun nor moon, for the Lamb is the light thereof." She will have reached her final end. She will have come to the Fountain of Light, from which all spirits are illuminated, and will be at the Fountain of Life, in which all the angels and saints are blessed with eternal life. She will see God. And what is it to see God? "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of any man to conceive what God hath prepared for them who love Him." Let

* S. Ambros. *De Institut. Virginum*, c. ii.

us not be deceived, I again repeat, by our present limitations. This world is but our place of trial; the body is our prison, and our carnal senses are the fetters that confine the soul. We are now in the day of clouds, and see but obscurely, and have but slight foretastes of the life to come. But when we are delivered from this earthly prison, and unfettered from the carnal senses, and the spirit prepared by faith and love shall pass from place and time, and come into the open presence of God, her capacity shall expand to all its magnitude, as the glory of God enters into her being. A fire of life will enter into her spirit, giving her immortal strength to behold the vision of God. Beholding with open face, she will be filled with light, and see all truths in one Eternal Truth, and will see the substance of truth in the Father who created her, in the Son who redeemed her, and the Holy Ghost who sanctified her. In one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in all intelligences, she will see the beginning and the end of whatever is good in heaven or on earth.

God is love. The life of God is love. The life of all that are in God is love from His infinite love. This life of love carries the intelligent creature towards God with a fire and force that consumes every thought and desire of turning again to the creature. For all good is found in the One Supreme Good, on which the soul makes her final rest. She neither turns to herself, nor to anything beneath herself. God is her object, her light, her strength, her life. "They shall be inebriated with the torrent of His delight." The soul is now a pure likeness of God, looking to Him alone, filled with His good to the brim of her capacity, no longer living in herself, because God lives in her. She sees nothing in herself, but become ecstatic, she sees all things in God. And what shall she there see?

She beholds the mystery of the Holy Trinity, the fountain of all reason and life. She beholds God at His work of creation, drawing all things out of nothing through the Eternal Word. She beholds Him exercising the stupendous work of His providence, ruling all things on their course, nourishing all things, and giving to each creature the perfection that accords with His eternal plan. She beholds the Eternal Word in His infinite and eternal beauty, illuminating all spirits and enlightening all intelligences. She beholds Him in His Godhead as He is the image of the

Father's substance and the splendour of His glory. She beholds Him in His humanity, as He sits at the right hand of the Father, and looks into the depths of the mystery of human redemption, into which the angels longed to look before it was accomplished. She beholds the Son of God as He is the divine head of His Church and of humanity, sending forth to all the earth the rays of His light, the streams of His grace, and the power of His spirit, and holding the members within His body in the unity of faith and obedience. She sees the Holy Spirit, one eternal love with the Father and the Son, sending forth the gifts of wisdom and sanctification, reaching from end to end of all things mightily, and disposing all things sweetly towards their final end. She sees that whatever is good, or wise, or strong, or pure, or sweet, or beautiful, or deserving of love in the created universe, is but some shadow, reflection, image, or vestige of that supreme and sovereign power, wisdom, goodness, beauty, holiness, and perfect unity of Being, in whom is the one indivisible and eternal life, whom she blesses and adores as the infinite good, and as the inexhaustible giver of all good to every creature.

That soul, thus blessed with the beatific vision, is but one of myriads of spirits, embracing every order of angels and saints, who form one society in God, and after their successful probation form one united kingdom of heaven. Each of those innumerable spirits was a special creation, and each is a distinct and singular work of grace. Each a several and particular star of light and life in that bright heaven, with her own history, her own accomplished course, her own especial reward and glory. And whilst each is a likeness of God, how endlessly varied is the likeness. The good of each is the joy of all, for there is no jealousy where there is no self-love, and where the same divine spirit worketh all in all.

Now do those blessed spirits comprehend the full sense of His words who redeemed them in His precious blood: "I am the light and the life." And "I have given you to have life, and to have it more abundantly." And "As the Father liveth by me, and I by the Father, so he that partaketh of me, the same shall live by me." And where He said: "He that loveth me shall be loved of my Father: and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." As He also said: "If any one love me, he will keep my word, and my Father will love him, and we will come to him,

and make our abode with him." All that these divine promises signify is now unveiled and perfected, in spirits become all sight and spiritual sense, and able through their whole capacity to embrace the supreme good for which they were created.

As the soul contemplates all things in God, and nothing in herself, and as all things past are present with Him, she sees all that God has done for her in the divine mirror of Eternal Truth, and there beholds the record of her marvellous advancement from her beginning on the verge of nothingness to her final end in God. Her creation in the image of God, her gift of rational light, and her growth and progress in the world through the unceasing gifts of God's providence in so many kinds, are all present to her mind. The work of her redemption and restoration to God fills her heart with an unspeakable gratitude. She beholds all those converging lines ot good, whether earthly or heavenly, which God in His loving care had made to bear upon her course of life, to nourish and protect her nature, instruct her mind, sustain her hope, and build her up in the service of the living God. She sees the whole of that precious chain of divine lights, graces, inspirations, encouragements in trial, pardons after failure, consolations and strengthenings, that extend over her mortal life, and has brought her on her way to God. She sees how God went before her preparing her way, and with her to support her in the way, and followed after her to make her way secure; afflicting her but to heal, striking but to save, humbling but to exalt her. In a word, she there in that eternal mirror sees how God made all things work together for the good of His elect.

She there also sees with most profound astonishment, how poor are all the services which even the most zealous of His intelligent creatures render to God, when compared to the services that God has rendered to them. He has not only given us the services of His creatures on earth and of His angels and saints in heaven, but has Himself provided for all our needs of every kind. And when our blessed Lord came to this earth He said: "I came not to be served, but to serve." Hence great saints of God, in moments of ecstatic intuition, have used such language as this: "When I behold the dear God taking such care of us, and bringing us all that we have need of both for soul and body, I cannot but exclaim—Oh God, Thou art our servant." It is nobler to give than to receive, but to serve is to give more than all gifts. The

Son of God gave Himself to us. It is most truly a very noble thing to give ourselves to God's service, since He gives Himself to ours.

That one soul whom we have considered as she has reached the final object of her existence, is but an example from the great multitude which no man can number, and in whom are exhibited the inexhaustible diversities of the divine gifts. Each of them has a separate and singular history; each has her own course among the countless tracks that mark the ways of souls through time; each her own path of providence; each her own luminous chain of graces and mercies that have conducted her in a different way from nothingness to the final possession of God. And when all these souls shall have received their corporal frames anew, raised in the power of Christ from mortality to immortality, and from dishonour to glory, each will be the spiritualized and agile instrument of the soul to which it belongs, having its own proper character and glory, derived from the glorifying presence of God in the soul. The great end of the creation, contemplated from the first, is accomplished in them. God is wonderful in His saints. Their very bodies are as harps and cymbals on which to celebrate the praises of God, who has raised earth itself to a life so magnificent. The kingdom of Christ is transformed into the kingdom of heaven, where He reigns supreme over those whom He has purchased with His blood, and perfected by His spirit. It is the new heaven and the new earth raised up to God by Him who makes all things new. And whilst every spirit praises God with a gratitude ever renewed for all that He has done for her, that endless diversity of spirits, in whom one spirit reigns, gives an inconceivable breadth and magnificence to the harmony of the celestial choirs, in whom all the works of the Lord bless the Lord, praise and exalt Him for evermore.

We may sum up the moral application of this book in a few sentences from the pen of St. Hilary. "In His own example the Lord hath taught us to give up the ambition of human glory. He has also left us this precept: 'The Lord thy God thou shalt adore, and Him only shalt thou serve.' And through His prophet He tells us that He chooses the humble people who tremble at His word, and shows us thereby that He has placed the beginning of beatitude in an humble spirit. If we breathe humble things, we shall not forget that we are men; and whilst we are made members

of God's Kingdom, our conscience will keep us in remembrance that God has perfected our body out of the meanest and poorest elements, and through His ministering providence has advanced our soul to her present sense, and to her present ability of knowing, feeling, judging, and acting. Nothing is any man's own, for no one can claim an exclusive right or property in what he has. From one Divine Father we have all received the same beginning of life, and He has ministered the substance whereby our life has grown and is maintained. Our duty, therefore, is to imitate that bounty which is exercised towards us by the best of fathers in giving us all things. This is done by being good to all, and by holding what we have received at the service of all. On the other hand, we ought not to suffer the pretentious insolence of this world to corrupt us, nor the thirst for wealth, nor the ambition of vain glory. But let us keep ourselves subject to God; and as we have received a life that is common to all, let us hold to all who have this life by the charity that is given us for all. We may take the fact that we have been advanced thus far from nothing by the Divine Goodness, as proof that we may be advanced still further, until we reach the Divine Goodness Himself, as the honour and reward of our faithful conduct in this life. Thus through the spirit of humility, whereby we are subject to God and to His gifts, we are brought to the better things of our hope, and the Kingdom of Heaven will be ours."*

* S. Hilarius, *in Matthæum*, c. iv.

THE END.

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Ullathorne, Bishop
AUTHOR

The Endowments of Man
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